The Shi'ites Under Attack

About the Author

Imam Muhammad Jawad Chirri is Lebanese by birth and a graduate of the Islamic Institute of Najaf in Iraq. Before reaching the age of 25, he wrote about Islamic jurisprudence and its basis. The following are some of his books dealing with this subject:

1. Al-Riyad in the Basis of Jurisprudence
2. Al-Taharah (the purity)
3. Fasting
4. The Book of Prayer
5. The Islamic Wills

When he returned from Najaf to Lebanon, Imam Chirri and the unforgettable personality, Shaykh Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya, the author of many valuable books, waged a campaign trying to awaken the people of southern Lebanon and urging them to rise in order to gain usurped rights in the Lebanese society.

During that period, the late Imam Abd al-Husayn Sharaf al-Din urged the author to write a book about the caliphate. The author honored this righteous request by writing a book called The Caliphate in the Islamic Constitution.

The book was received in Najaf with a great deal of appreciation and motivated the members of Muntada Al-Nashr (a religious college) to meet and discuss the book. The main speaker of that gathering was the prominent scholar, Sayyid Muhammad Taqi al-Hakim. The book, in spite of its small size, was considered to be a novelty in Islamic dialogue.

During the year 1949, the author immigrated to the United States of America in response to an invitation by the Muslims in detroit, Michigan. When he arrived in the United States, he found himself in an uncomfortable position, unable to communicate with the Americans and the American born Muslims because he did not know English.

Too old to become a student in a regular American school but anxious to spread the word of Islam, he immersed himself heart and soul into the language. Within a short time, he taught himself English well enough to serve the Muslims of the Detroit area. Later he became a well-known lecturer and scholar on Islam throughout the United States, the Middle East, and

Africa. In addition, he has written several books in English about Islam. Among them are the following:

1. Muslim Practice
2. The Faith of Islam
3. Inquiries About Islam
4. Imam Hussein, Leader of the Martyrs
5. The Brother of the Prophet Muhammad (the Imam Ali). (He also wrote this book in Arabic and named it Amir al-Mu'minin)

NEXT

Introduction

In the name of the Almighty the Beneficent, the Most Merciful. Praise be to God, the Lord of the Worlds.

The Muslims were never at any time more in need of mutual understanding and unity than they are today. The conspiracies against Islam never were more serious than they are at the present time.

Unfortunately, many Muslim governments have taken a very unholy direction, spreading hatred among Muslims. Unsound and erroneous books and pamphlets were, and still are, distributed among the Muslims, telling lies and hurling numerous accusations against the Shi'ite Muslims while the latter were seemingly unaware of those accusations.

During the centuries following the birth of Islam, many accusations were made to disgrace the followers of the members of the House of the Prophet. However, they never took the shape of the serious and malicious campaign that has taken place during the last six years.

This false and malicious campaign started after the birth of the Islamic Republic in Iran. It seems that some of the Arab governments found the birth of this Republic a threatening danger. This Republic reminds Muslims of the period of the righteous caliphate and makes a clear distinction between the words and the deeds of the Arab governments who claim to be committed to Islam, yet spend the public wealth to satisfy the low desires of the rulers.

These governments tried to extinguish the light of the Islamic Republic by war, but they did not succeed. Therefore, they are trying to deceive the Muslim population and turn them against the Iranian Muslims by fabricating accusations in a sectarian campaign, aiming to convince the innocent Muslims that the Shi'ites have deviated from the path of Islam. Should such a campaign succeed, unsuspecting and unsophisticated Muslims may find it religiously legal to combat the Shi'ites and shed the blood of the Iranians, who have sacrificed for Islam more than any other people.

The Shi'ites have tried for many years to meet this campaign with silence, closing their eyes and hoping that it would come to an end, and that there would be no need to refute the malicious accusations.

It was also hoped that some of the Sunni scholars would try to refute these accusations. There is no doubt that many Sunni scholars are aware of the Islamic doctrines to which the Shi'ites subscribe. Should they be unaware of the Shi'ite doctrines, it would be very easy to become acquainted with them. There are numerous books written by Shi'ite scholars about those doctrines, and those books are available.

It is possible for the Sunni scholars to call for an Islamic conference in which religious differences may be discussed and an appreciation for each other's viewpoint developed. This is what the Qur'an calls for:

> "O you who believe, if a transgressor brings to you news, verify it, lest you inflict damage on people unwittingly; you may consequently regret your hasty action." (ch. 49, v.6)

It is regrettable that the Sunni scholars did not move in this direction and did not try, as far as is known, to refute the untrue accusations which were publicized by the hypocrite campaigners.

Our silence did not stop this campaign. It made it more vehement. Many people thought that our silence is evidence of the truthfulness of the accusations, and that we are unable to answer them.

Thus, it has become necessary to clarify the truth and inform all the Muslims who like to know the truth. In this effort, we shall not accuse the Sunni brothers of disbelief, deviation, or transgression, as some of them have accused the Shi'ites. We shall not place ourselves in such a position, which is improper for any Muslim to take. We obey the Almighty in His prohibition:

> "O you who believe, let not a folk ridicule another folk who may be better than they are; nor should women ridicule other women who may be better than them. Neither defame one another nor insult one another by calling names. That is the name of lewdness after faith and whoso turns not in repentance, such are evildoers." (ch. 49, v.11)

It should be pointed out to the reader that those who make these prohibited accusations use a very strange method to indict millions of Muslims whom they do not know, did not see, and with whom they did not speak. They tried and convicted millions of Muslims who lived centuries ago, along with the numerous future Shi'ite generations yet to be born. They have also convicted millions of contemporary Muslims without questioning them and without searching for the truth, which is within easy access to any interested person.

Do The Shi'ite Muslims Say That The Qur'an Is Incomplete?

The late Egyptian Muslim scholar Muhammad Abu Zahra said in his book al-Imam al-Sadiq that Muhammad bin Ya'qub al-Kulayni (a hadith recorder, died in 329 AH), recorded in his book "Usul al-Kafi" that the Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq said that the Qur'an which was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad contained seven thousand verses, while the verses we read in the Qur'an are only 6262. The rest is treasured by the members of the House of the Prophet ...

Shaykh Abu Zahra issued a harsh judgment against the hadith recorder al-Kulayni while Shaykh Kulayni is unable to defend himself because he met his Lord centuries ago. In spite of Shaykh Abu Zahra's harsh judgment against al-Kulayni, he did not try to accuse all the Shi'ites with what he accused al-Kulayni.

Al-Kulayni's report concerning the incompleteness of the Qur'an is unacceptable to the Imamite Shi'ites (who are the overwhelming majority of the Shi'ites). They say that the Qur'an is complete without addition, deletion, or change.

Professor Muhammad Abu Zahra in his book Imam al-Sadiq said that al-Safi, a prominent Shi'ite scholar, said in his commentary on the Holy Qur'an the following:

> "According to Shaykh Abu Ali al-Tabarsi, another prominent Shi'ite scholar, 'There are no words added to the Qur'an. Any claim of added words is unanimously denied by the Shi'ites. As to the deletion, some Shi'ites and some Sunnis said that there is change or deletion. Our scholars deny that.' "

Sayyid al-Murtada, another prominent Shi'ite scholar, said:

> "... our certainty of the completeness of the Qur'an is like our certainty of the existence of countries or major events which are self-evident. Motives and reasons for recording and guarding the Holy Qur'an are numerous, because the Qur'an is a miracle of the Prophethood and the source of Islamic knowledge and religious rule. Their concern with the Qur'an made the Muslim scholars highly efficient concerning its grammar, its reading, and its verses. "

With this unequaled concern, there is no possibility the Qur'an was changed or deleted in

some parts. The mercenary writers---who only try to divide Muslims as a service to the hypocrite Muslim governments---should be informed of the following:

(1) Al-Kulayni is not an Imam of the Shi'ites. He is only a hadith recorder who reported what was conveyed to him through one or more sources. He did not say that he heard from al-Imam al-Sadiq. He only said that a hadith came to him through some reporters. He did not live during the days of the Imam al-Sadiq. He did not see any of the Imams of the Members of the House of the Prophet.

The Reporters Of The Incompleteness Of The Qur'an From The Sunnis Are Numerous

2) Al-Kulayni was not the only scholar who reported the incompleteness of the Qur'an. There are many hadith recorders, in the books of Sunni scholars, who reported that the Caliph 'Umar, 'A'ishah, and a number of the companions of the Prophet said that the Qur'an is incomplete.

The Sahih Of Al-Bukhari

Al-Bukhari recorded in his Sahih (authentic), part eight, pages 209-210, that Ibn 'Abbas reported that 'Umar bin al-Khattab said in a discourse which he delivered during the last year of his caliphate:

> "Certainly Allah sent Muhammad with the truth, and revealed to him the Book. One of the revelations which came to him was the verse of stoning. We read it and understood it.
>
> "The Messenger of God stoned and we stoned after him. I am concerned that if time goes on, someone may say, 'By God, we do not find the verse of stoning in the Book of God;' thus, the Muslims will deviate by neglecting a commandment the Almighty revealed.
>
> "Stoning is in the Book of God. It is the right punishment for a person who commits adultery if the required witnesses are available, or there was pregnancy without marriage or adultery is admitted."
>
> Again, we used to read in the what we found in the Book of God:
>
> "Do not deny the fatherhood of your fathers in contempt because it is disbelief on your part to be ashamed of the fatherhood of your fathers."

Similar reports were recorded by Imam Ahmad in part one of his Musnad (in the Musnad of 'Umar under the caption of the Hadith al-Saqifah, pages 47 and 55). Ibn Hisham recorded

similar things in his Seerah of the Prophet. part 2, page 658 (second printing, 1955).

Sahih (Authentic) Of Muslim

Muslim in the seventh part of his Sahih (commentary of al-Nawawi) in the Book of al-Zakah, about the virtue of being satisfied with whatever God gives and about urging people to have that virtue, pages 139-140, reported that Abu al-Aswad reported that his father said:

> " Abu Musa al-Ash'ari invited the Qur'an readers of Basra. Three hundred readers responded to his invitation. He told them: You are the readers and the choice of the people of Basra. Recite the Qur'an and do not neglect it. Otherwise, a long time may elapse and your hearts will be hardened as the hearts of those who came before you were hardened.
>
> " 'We used to read a chapter from the Qur'an similar to Bara'ah in length and seriousness, but I forgot it. I can remember from that chapter only the following words:
>
> " 'Should a son of Adam own two valleys full of wealth, he would seek a third valley, and nothing would fill Ibn Adam's abdomen but the soil.
>
> " 'We used to read a chapter similar to Musabbihat and I forgot it. I only remember out of it the following:
>
> " 'Oh you who believe, why do you say what you do not do? Thus a testimony will be written on your necks and you will be questioned about it on the Day of Judgment.' "

It is obvious that these words which Abu Musa mentioned are not from the Qur'an, nor are they similar to any of the words of God in the Qur'an. It is amazing that Abu Musa claims that two surahs from the Qur'an are missing, one of them similar to Bara'ah (the chapter of Bara'ah contains 130 verses).

'A'ishah

Muslim also reported in the Book of al-Rida'ah (Book of Nursing), part 10, page 29, that 'A'ishah said the following:

> "There was in what was revealed in the Qur'an that ten times of nursing known with certainty makes the nursing woman a mother of a nursed child. This number of nursings would make the woman 'haram' (forbidden) to the child. The this verse was replaced by 'five known nursings' to make the woman

> forbidden to the child. The Prophet died while these words were recorded and read in the Qur'an."

'Umar Said Chapter 33 Is Incomplete

Al-Muttaqi 'Ali bin Husam al-Din in his book "Mukhtasar Kanz al-'Ummal" printed on the margin of Imam Ahmad's Musnad, part two, page 2, in his hadith about chapter 33, said that Ibn Mardawayh reported that Hudhayfah said:

'Umar said to me 'How many verses are contained in the chapter of al-Ahzab?' I said, '72 or 73 verses.' He said it was almost as long as the chapter of the Cow, which contains 287 verses, and in it there was the verse of stoning.

Mustadrak Al-Sahihayn

Al-Hakim al-Nisaburi in his book al-Mustadrak in the book of commentary on the Qur'an, part two, page 224, reported that Ubay bin Ka'b (whom the Prophet called the leader of al-Ansar), said that the Messenger of God said to him:

> "Certainly the Almighty commanded me to read the Qur'an in front of you, and he read 'The unbelievers from the people of the Book and the pagans will not change their way until they see the evidence. Those who disbelieve among the people of the scripture and idolaters could not change until the clear proof came unto them. A Messenger from Allah, reading purified pages ...' "

And of the very excellent part of it "Should Ibn Adam ask for a valley full of wealth and I grant it to him, he would ask for another valley. And if I grant him that, he would ask for a third valley. Nothing would fill the abdomen of Ibn Adam except the soil. God accepts the repentance of anyone who repents. The religion in the eyes of God is the Hanafiyah (Islam) rather than Yahudiyyah (Judaism) or Nasraniyyah (Christianity). Whoever does good, his goodness will not be denied."

Al-Hakim said:

> "This is an authentic hadith but the two shaykhs (al-Bukhari and Muslim) did not record it. Al-Dhahabi also considered it authentic in his commentary (on al-Mustadrak)."

Al-Hakim reported also that Ubay Ibn Kabb used to read:

> "Those who disbelieved had set up in their hearts the zealotry of the age of ignorance; and if you had had a similar zealotry, the Sacred Mosque would

> have been corrupted, and God brought down His peace of reassurance upon His Messenger."

When this reading was conveyed to 'Umar, he became very angry with Ubay. He sent for him while he was treating his she-camel with tar. He also invited other companions, including Zayd Ibn Thabit. Ubay came to him. 'Umar asked: "Who among you would read the chapter of al-Fatah (victory)? Zayd Ibn Thabit read the chapter the way we read it now. 'Umar spoke to Ubay angrily. Ubay said 'Shall I speak?' 'Umar said 'Speak out.' Ubay said 'You know that I used to enter the house of the Prophet, and he used to teach me the reading of the Qur'an while you and others were by the door.'"

> "If you want me to teach people the way the Prophet taught me, I will teach them; otherwise, I will not teach them one letter ever."

'Umar said to him: "Continue teaching people how to read."

Al-Hakim said this is authentic according to the standards of the two shaykhs (al-Bukhari and Muslim). However, they did not report it.

Al-Dhahabi also considered it authentic in his Commentary on al-Mustadrak, part two, pages 225-226.

If we take the report of Ibn Mardawayh which Hudhayfah attributed to 'Umar in which he said that the chapter of al-Ahzab, which contained 72 verses, was as long as the chapter of the Cow (which contained 287) and take the report of Abu Musa which says that a chapter equal in length to the chapter of Bara'ah (which contains 130 verses) was deleted from the Qur'an, then the deletion in the Qur'an according to these reports would be about 345 verses.

If this is true, what would be the difference between the deletion according to these reports and the report which is attributed to al-Kulayni that claims a deletion of 600 verses?

Furthermore, suppose that al-Kulayni had recorded in his book al-Kafi that some of the Qur'anic verses were deleted. Why should all the Shi'ites be accused of the belief in the incompleteness of the Qur'an? Kulayni is not an Imam of the Shi'ites, and the Shi'ites are not his followers.

Al-Kulayni was no more than a hadith recorder. If a scholar like him makes a mistake, why should we attribute that mistake to the millions of Shi'ites who are not even his followers?

If such an accusation is permissible, why should we not accuse all the Sunnis of the belief in the incompleteness of the Qur'an because they all are followers of 'Umar who was quoted by al-Bukhari, Muslim, Imam Ahmad, and Ibn Mardawayh to have said that the Qur'an was

incomplete, and that more than 200 Qur'anic verses were deleted?

Why should the Caliph 'Umar, 'A'ishah, Abu Musa, and Ubay Ibn Ka'b not be accused of the same thing because all of them stated the incompleteness of the Qur'an?

Accusing Muslims of Kufr or deviation is abhorable to God. We have been commanded by the Qur'an and the Prophet to consider anyone who declares that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of God to be a Muslim. al-Bukhari reported that 'Abdullah Ibn 'Umar reported that the Messenger of God said:

> "When a person calls his Muslim brother a Kafir, one of the two would carry the sin."

We believe that the Qur'an as it is now is the entire Qur'an without addition, subtraction, or change.

It is the Qur'an which no falsehood from the era of pre-revelation or post-revelation entered it. It is a revelation from the Mighty, the Praised.

Allah promised that He will protect the Qur'an. He said "Certainly We revealed the Reminder (the Holy Qur'an), and certainly We shall preserve it." (ch. 15, v. 9)

It is the Qur'an through which the Messenger and the Members of his House commanded us to test the authenticity of every hadith, and accept the hadith which agrees with the Qur'an and reject the hadith that disagrees with it.

We believe that whoever says that the Qur'an is incomplete, or was added to, or changed, is completely wrong. What was reported on this subject from Caliph 'Umar, Abu Musa, Ubay Ibn Ka'b, al-Bukhari, Imam Ahmad, Muslim, al-Hakim, and al-Kulayni is completely rejected and absolutely unacceptable.

We certainly reject all of these reports, but we will not pass any judgment on any of the above mentioned reporters. Passing judgment belongs only to Allah.

It is hoped that what was offered on this subject is sufficient for those who try to find the truth, that the Shi'ite Muslims are true believers deserving respect from their Sunni brothers. It is unbecoming of those who seek the truth to accuse others of a sin of which they are entirely innocent, especially when the accusers have committed worse than that of which they accuse others.

Finally, I would like to say that al-Kulayni's report concerning the incompleteness of the Qur'an does not indicate that he believed in what he recorded. al-Bukhari, Muslim, Imam

Ahmad, and al-Hakim have reported that 'Umar, 'A'ishah, and a number of companions stated that the Qur'an is incomplete. Yet we do not say that these hadith recorders believed in what they recorded.

I am inclined to believe that al-Kulayni did not subscribe to what he reported because he mentioned in his book al-Kafi that all hadiths should be tested by the Book of God (the Qur'an). Whatever agrees with the Qur'an should be accepted, and whatever disagrees with the Qur'an should be rejected.

Al-Kulayni mentioned in his introduction to his book the following:

> "Brother, may God lead you to the right road. You ought to know that it is impossible for anyone to distinguish the truth from the untruth when Muslim scholars disagree upon statements attributed to the Imams. There is only one way to separate the true from the untrue reports, through the standard which was declared by the Imam:
>
> "'Test the various reports by the Book of God; whatever agrees with it take it, whatever disagrees with it reject it.
>
> "'Take what is agreed upon (by scholars). Certainly the universally accepted should not be doubted. '"

These words indicate that al-Kulayni believed that the Book of God is the Qur'an which we read; otherwise, how can we test the various reports through the Book of God?

At the same time, these words indicate that the reports which indicated the incompleteness of the Qur'an should be rejected because they are in disagreement with the Book of God, which declares:

> "Certainly We (the Almighty) have revealed the Reminder (the Qur'an), and We shall preserve it."

The Imam said:

> "Take the agreed upon, for the agreed upon by the Islamic scholars should not be doubted."

And we know that the Book of God is the one on which all the Islamic scholars agree.

Do the Shi'ite Muslims Say That the Revelation Came to Muhammad by Mistake, and That it Was Intended for Ali?

This is a vicious lie widely spread in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and other Arab countries in order to discredit the followers of the members of the House of the Prophet. This accusation was made during periods of oppression against the Shi'ites. The rulers of the periods of the Umayyads and Abbasids used to consider every follower of the Members of the House of the Prophet revolutionary and dangerous. They conspired against these Shi'ites and accused them of heresy and disbelief in order to encourage the Muslims to shed their blood and usurp their rights and wealth.

The centuries of oppression passed with all their injustices and terrors. It was expected that during the new period of freedom, the mistakes of the past would be corrected. It was hoped that the Muslim scholars would make a serious study in order to see if there is any justification for such terrible accusations.

It is very easy to know the truth.

There are hundreds of books written by Shi'ite scholars about their beliefs. Had the Sunni scholars read any of these books, they would have found that the Shi'ite beliefs are in full agreement with the Book of God and the well-known statements of the Prophet.

We are living in the era of speed and easy movement. It is easy for Muslim scholars to have conferences, discuss problems, and find solutions.

The simplest principle of justice is to follow the commandments of the Holy Qur'an:

> "Oh you who believe, if a transgressor comes to you with news, try to verify it, lest you inflict damage on people unwittingly; then you may consequently regret your hasty action" (ch. 49, v.6).

The Almighty commanded us to try to find out whether an accusation is true or false, and that we ought not to try people and convict them without questioning them.

We do not know of any court in the world in which the judge convicts a person before

interviewing him, provided the accused is available and honors the summons.

In spite of the ease with which one can find the correct information nowadays, we find that those who accuse and spread hatred among Muslims do not take one single step in order to find the truth which may unite the Muslim world.

While writing these words, I recollect that the Egyptian government during the fifties sent the late Dr. Muhammad Bisar to Washington, D.C., as director of the Islamic Center there. I went to visit him and he received me kindly and informed me of the knowledge he had acquired concerning American Muslims. He initiated a dialogue between us, saying:

> "Some of the Muslims in this country asked me about the various Islamic sects. I declared to them that all Muslim sects are good except the Shi'ite Ithna 'ashari."

I immediately realized that Dr. Bisar did not know the meaning of the Shi'ite Ithna 'ashari. Otherwise, he would not have been rude enough to say that to me while I am a Shi'ite Ithna 'ashari. Thus, we had the following dialogue:

Chirri: What is wrong with the Ithna 'ashari?

Bisar: They believe in things opposed to Islam.

Chirri: Give us an example of their wrong belief.

Bisar: They say the revelation came to Muhammad by mistake, and that Ali Ibn Abi Talib was supposed to receive the revelation.

Chirri: How did you learn that?

Bisar: I read it in the book of Al-milal wa al-nihal by al-Shahrastani.

Chirri: Have you asked any Shi'ite scholar about this subject?

Bisar: No, I have not.

Chirri: Then you have convicted millions of Muslims and considered them "kafir" without asking any of them about this serious accusation. Did the Almighty command you to do that? And did Egypt send you to propagate such a vicious message?

A year after our meeting in Washington, I met Dr. Bisar in Philadelphia at an Islamic

conference. He informed me that he re-examined the book of AI-milal wa al-nihal by al-Shahrastani and found that what was attributed to the Shi'ites, that the revelation came to Muhammad by mistake, was not the belief of the Ithna 'ashari Shi'ite school of thought. It was, rather, a sect which existed and disappeared hundreds of years ago. Hearing that from him, I accepted his apology. Yet, I was amazed that it took him a whole year to re-read the book and discover the truth.

I spent years studying hadith and Islamic history books which were written by Sunni and Ithna 'ashari scholars. I never found in any Shi'ite book a hadith or historical report indicating that Ali Ibn Abi Talib was higher than or equal to Muhammad. As a matter of fact, I found only the opposite. The Shi'ites consider Ali to be the best man after the Messenger because he was the most obedient to him.

One of the hadiths which the Shi'ites pride themselves upon is a hadith attributed to the Messenger of God. The Prophet said to the tribe of Wulay'ah:

> "Bani Wulay'ah, you must change your attitude, or I shall send to you a man who is from me to punish you severely."

Some of the people who were present asked the Prophet "Who is the man you are going to send to them?" The Prophet replied: "He is the man who was patching the sole of my shoes." They looked around and found Ali patching the sole of the Prophet's shoes.

It is inconceivable that the Shi'ites can be proud of the fact that Ali was the patcher of the Prophet Muhammad's shoes and claim that the Imam is higher than or equal to the Prophet. Therefore, I do not find any justification for directing such an accusation at the Shi'ites who glorify the Prophet the most.

The Shi'ites say that the highest honor the Imam Ali acquired is that he was chosen by the Prophet to be his brother. When the Prophet commanded every two Muslims to become brothers, he held Ali's hand and said "This is my brother." Thus, the Messenger of God, the highest Messenger, the Imam of all righteous people, the one who had no equal among the servants of God, made Ali his brother. (Al-Seerah al-Nabawiyyah, by Ibn Hisham, part 1, page 505).

Are The Sunnites Clear Of Exaggeration?

Certainly the Shi'ites are not extremist, and there is no hadith reported by the Shi'ites that may justify such an accusation. However, it would not be improper to ask the following question: Are the Sunnites and their scholars free of exaggeration and extremism concerning the position of some prominent companions of the Prophet?

It would not be out of place to say that the Sunnites are closer to extremism than the Shi'ites. We find in the books of the Sunni scholars and hadith recorders indications that they put 'Umar in a position higher than that of the Messenger of God. The following are some of the hadiths:

"Al-Hakim Al-Nisaburi (in his book AI-Mustadrak, part 3, page 84), reported that Ubayy Ibn Ka'b said the following:

> "I heard the Messenger of God saying: The first one the Almighty will embrace on the Day of Judgement is 'Umar. The first one the Lord will shake hands with will be 'Umar, and the first one the Almighty takes by His hand and admits to paradise is 'Umar."

Al-Hafiz Muhammad Ibn Majah in his authentic Sunan reported that Ubayy Ibn Ka'b said:

> "The Messenger of God said: The first one God will shake hands with (on the Day of Judgement) will be 'Umar. The first one God will greet is 'Umar, and he is the first one Allah takes by His hand and admits to paradise."

These hadiths clearly indicate that 'Umar will be above all the Prophets including the head of the Prophets, Muhammad. When 'Umar is to be the first embraced and his hand shaken by the Almighty, all the prophets will be after him.

This is a strange and astonishing hadith. It portrays the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth as a human who embraces people and shakes hands with them.

Al-Hakim also reported that Jabir Ibn Abdullah said that Abu Bakr said that he heard the Messenger say: "The sun never rose on a man better than 'Umar."

Al-Hakim said "This hadith is authentic." (AI-Mustadrak, part 3, page 90).

If the sun never rose on a man better than 'Umar, it means that 'Umar was not less than any of the Prophets of God including their highest, Muhammad Ibn Abdullah.

It is reported among the virtues of 'Umar that the Messenger of God said: "Whenever Gabriel delayed in his visits to me, I guessed that he was sent to 'Umar." (Ibn Abi Al-Hadid, Vol.6, part 12, page 178).

It is also reported that 'Umar is the lamp of the people of paradise. (Ibn Hajar, Al Sawa'iq AI-Muhriqah, page 97).

If the Prophet had been concerned whether Gabriel could have visited 'Umar, 'Umar would

have been equal to the Prophet in position and would have been a competitor. Furthermore, how could 'Umar be the light of the people of paradise while the Prophets, including the Messenger of God, are among the people of paradise?

This means that the light of 'Umar is higher than the light of all the prophets. Furthermore, if 'Umar is the light of the people of paradise, and the width of paradise is the Heaven and the Earth, it means that 'Umar's light is the light of the universe. Should that be the case, all the prophets would be in need of his light, and that would mean that 'Umar is above the messengers of God.

In conclusion, I would like to say that I do not mean, through these hadiths, to accuse our Sunnite brothers of placing 'Umar above the Final Messenger of God and the rest of the prophets. This is certainly not my intention; but I wanted to say that what the Sunnites attributed to the Shi'ites, that Ali is above Muhammad, is an unjustifiable and vicious lie because there is nothing in the Shi'ite books that indicates this allegation.

The Shi'ites consider the spread of such a lie a flagrant aggression against the glory of Islam and the honor of the Shi'ites.

I wanted to bring to the attention of the readers that the Imamite Shi'ites are too righteous to accuse their Sunnite brothers of placing a man above the Prophet in spite of the fact that there are many hadiths, which are considered by the Sunni scholars to be authentic, indicating that 'Umar is higher than the great Messenger and the messengers who were before him.

Do the Imams Have Any Authority on the Universe?

The mercenary writers have tried more than one way to insult the followers of the Members of the House of the Prophet Muhammad. Among these shameful ways is the allegation that the Shi'ite Muslims believe that the Imams from the Members of the House of the Prophet Muhammad control the atoms of the universe. These writers declare that such a belief is a belief in the divinity of the Imams.

They tried to prove this accusation by another allegation. They accused the revolutionary Islamic leader, Imam Khumayni, of saying in one of his books or lectures that the Imams from the Members of the House of the Prophet Muhammad control the atoms of the universe.

I have never read such a statement in the books or lectures of Imam Khumayni. However, let us assume that he indeed said this. But let us try to understand his words instead of deliberately trying to misunderstand them.

Did the revolutionary leader mean that the Imams have an independent authority over the atoms of nature separate from the authority of God Almighty? Did he mean that the Imams are able, by their own power, to change the course of nature? Could he not have meant that the Imams are so absolutely obedient to God, and that because of their purity and obedience to Him, He responds to their prayers? Therefore, if they ask Him to change a natural course, their prayers are answered.

There is no doubt that Imam Khumayni does not think that the Imams have power independent from the Almighty. He is too pure and righteous to voice such a thing, write it, or think it. He is one of the most righteous, pure, and obedient to the Almighty.

If Imam Khumayni had said that the Imams can control the atoms of the universe, he undoubtedly meant that the Imams of the House of the Prophet Muhammad had ascended in their obedience and worship to God to such a high degree that they could have asked the Almighty to transform the atoms of one object into the atoms of another, and He would have granted their request. Furthermore, if they had asked Him to revive a dead person, God would have brought him back to life. Is this a belief in the divinity of the Imams?

Those who attribute such a statement to Imam Khumayni and consider it a deviation from the

Islamic course should give the matter serious thought. They should test such a statement with the contents of the Holy Qur'an. The Great Book informs us of the miracles of the Prophets of God.

> And what is that in thy right hand, O Moses? He said: This is my staff. On it, I lean, and with it, I beat branches for my sheep, and in it I find other uses.
>
> "God said: Cast it down, O Moses! He cast it down, and behold! It became a snake, slithering. God said:
>
> Grasp it and fear not. We shall return it to its former state.
>
> "And draw thy hand to your side, it will come forth white without harm. That will be another miracle." (ch. 20. vs. 17-22).

This means that the dead cells which composed the rod of Moses were transformed into living cells. Then those living cells miraculously went back to dead cells. In chapter Al-Shu'ara, we read the following words of the Almighty:

> "We revealed to Moses: Strike the sea with thy staff. It parted, and each part was like a huge mountain." (ch. 26, v.64)

Does this not mean that God made the sea obedient to Moses to such a degree that Moses was able to divide the water of the sea into two solid parts, each of them as huge as a mountain in height and size?

The Qur'an Informs Us Of Jesus

In Al- 'Imran, we read that the Almighty informed us about Jesus:

> "And we will make him a messenger to the children of Israel (with this message): I come to you with a sign from your Lord. Lo! I fashion for you out of clay the likeness of a bird, and breathe into it, and it becomes a bird, by Allah's leave. I heal those born blind, and the lepers, and I raise the dead by Allah's leave . . ." (ch. 3, v.49)

Here we see that the Almighty enabled Jesus to transform a piece of clay into a living bird that could fly like other birds. Is this the work of Moses or Jesus? Would the Qur'an invite us to deify someone other than God?

The Qur'an Informs Us Of Muhammad

In regard to the Prophet Muhammad, we read God's word in the chapter of The Moon:

> "The hour (of judgement) is near, and the moon has been split. But if they see a sign, they turn away and say: This is prolonged magic." (ch. 54, vs. 1-2)

This verse informs us that Allah split the moon in response to His Messenger Muhammad's prayer, and this never happened before the time of Muhammad.

A Tree Walked In Response To The Order Of Muhammad

We find in Nahj al-Balaghah that Imam Ali reported that he was with the Prophet when the chieftains of Quraysh challenged him and asked him to order a nearby tree to uproot and walk to him. They said that this would be visible evidence of his prophethood. The Messenger of God spoke to the tree saying:

> "Tree, if you believe in Allah and the Hereafter and know that I am a Messenger of God, uproot and walk until you stand in front of me, with permission of God."

The tree, obeying the Prophet, uprooted and walked to him while making a loud noise like the wings of a flying bird.

When the chiefs saw the tree standing in front of the prophet, they asked him to make half the tree come forward and keep the other half in its original place. When he did that, they said: "Let the half that came to you go back to the other half. He did." (Nahj al-Balaghah, part 2, pp.158-9)

Ibn Hisham reported similar to this:

> "Rukanah Al-Muttalibi was the strongest man in Mecca. He met the Messenger outside Mecca and the Messenger invited him to Islam. Rukanah said: "If you can prove that you are a true messenger, I will follow you." The Messenger said: "What do you say if I wrestle you down? Will that make you believe that I am a true prophet?" Rukanah said: "Yes." The Prophet wrestled him down twice. Rukanah said: "Muhammad, this is really amazing. Did you really wrestle me?" The Prophet said: "I will show you more amazing things than this if you obey God and follow my way."
>
> Rukanah said: What is it? The Prophet said: "I will call this tree which you are looking at, and it will come to me." Rukanah said: Call it, and the Prophet called it. The tree came until it stood in front of him. The Prophet said to it: "Go back to your place," and it went to its original place. (Ibn Hisham, AI-

> Seerah al-Nabawiyyah, part 1, page 391)

These miracles which occurred in response to prayers of the Messenger of God testify, as documented in the Qur'an, that Allah empowers His great servants to perform miracles by His permission. In other words, He responds to the prayers of His Messengers by creating miracles.

What happened through the prophets does not indicate that they had any touch of divinity. On the contrary, it testifies that those prophets were true servants of God. They ascended to the highest degree of servitude to Him, and that their obedience to Him was absolute. Had they been otherwise, they would not have been able to perform any miracles, and no prayer by them would have been answered. They obeyed God completely and He responded to their prayers.

Are The Imams Like The Prophets?

It may be said that miracles are conceivable when they are attributed to messengers of God. However, the Imams of the Members of the House of the Prophet are not prophets. They were men of knowledge and righteousness, but none of them ascended to the degree of prophethood.

This is true, but the Imams from the House of the Prophet were non-prophets because the prophethood was concluded by the Messenger of God, the Prophet Muhammad. Had the Messenger not been the last of the prophets, it would have been possible for the Imams, or some of them, to be prophets. Probably other people could have become prophets as well.

The evidence of this is that the prophet said to Ali:

> "You are to me like Aaron was to Moses except that there shall be no prophets after me." (al-Bukhari, his Sahih, part 5, page 24).

This means that Ali was like Aaron in everything except the prophethood.

If any of the Sunnite scholars think that we are exaggerating by saying that Ali and the Imams from his children were qualified for the prophethood if the Messenger had not been the last of the Prophets, they should remember that prominent Sunnite scholars reported similar to this concerning 'Umar.

The hadith-recorder Ahmad Ibn Hajar Al-Haythami in his book AI-Sawa'iq AI-Muhriqah, page 96, documents that Imam Ahmad, Al-Tirmidhi, Al-Hakim, and Al-Tabarani reported that 'Uqbah Ibn 'Amir said that the Messenger of God said:

> "Had it been possible to have a prophet after me, that prophet would have been 'Umar."

Why should anyone think that it would be an exaggeration to say that Allah would make nature and the atoms of the universe obedient to the Imams of the House of the Prophet Muhammad when we do not consider it an exaggeration to say that 'Umar could have been a prophet if Muhammad had not been the final prophet.

Ibn Hajar, in his Al-Sawa'iq, page 102, reported that when Egypt was conquered by the Muslims, there was a custom to throw a girl in the Nile River on the 11th night of one of the non-Arabic months in order that the Nile would continue to flow. It was believed that without throwing a girl into it, the Nile would not flow. Amr Ibn al-As wrote to the Caliph 'Umar concerning this custom. 'Umar sent a message to the Nile saying:

> "If you were flowing before by your own power, we do not want you to run; and if Allah is the one who makes you flow, we ask the Almighty to make you flow."

Amr Ibn al-As threw the letter of 'Umar into the Nile one day before the Christian commemoration of the crucifixion. The following morning they woke up to find the river flowing stronger and had gone up 48 feet in one night.

Did the Shi'ite Muslims Borrow Some Jewish Teachings?

The mercenary writers whose goal is to split the Muslims allege that a Yemenite Jew from Sana', Abdullah Ibn Saba (also called Ibn al-Sawda), adopted Islam during the reign of the third Caliph 'Uthman. They allege that Ibn Saba, through some doctrines that he spread among Muslims, was a big factor in causing the revolt against 'Uthman. The following are some of the doctrines attributed to Ibn Saba.

(1). This alleged Jew invented the idea that the Prophet Muhammad would return before the Day of Judgement. He based his allegation on the return of Jesus, saying: "If Jesus is going to come back, Muhammad will also return because he is more important than Jesus."

He also quoted the following verse from the Qur'an to support his allegation:

> "Certainly the one who revealed the Qur'an to you shall return you."

These writers say that the Shi'ite school borrowed from this imaginary Jew the idea that the Prophet would return.

(2). Ibn Saba is the one who propagated the idea that Ali Ibn Abi Talib is the executor and successor of the Messenger of God. He said that there were a thousand prophets before Muhammad, and that each prophet had an executor after him, and that Ali is the executor of the Prophet. Furthermore, Ibn Saba said that the three caliphs who ruled after the Prophet were usurpers of the Islamic rule.

(3). Ibn Saba is the one who instigated the two prominent companions of the Prophet Muhammad, Abu Dharr and Am-mar Ibn Yasir, against 'Uthman.

The mercenary writers also allege that this imaginary Jew met Abu Dharr in Damascus, and that he introduced him to the idea of prohibiting treasuring gold and silver. He also said that the revenue from Zakat and land tax belongs to the Muslims rather than to God.

(4). Ibn Saba persuaded the men who participated in killing 'Uthman to start the battle of Basra (at night) between Imam Ali's camp and the camp of the three leaders (A'ishah, Talhah, and Zubayr). He wanted to make each of the two armies accuse the other of starting the

battle.

Let us discuss each of these allegations in order.

The Return Of The Prophet Muhammad

The attribution to Ibn Saba of the idea that the Prophet would return is ridiculous. It shows the ignorance of the mercenary writers who write such allegations. They misunderstand the history of Islam. Had these mercenaries studied Islamic history carefully, they would have known that the first one who declared the idea of the return of the Messenger of God was 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab.

Muslim historians agree that 'Umar stood at the Mosque of the Prophet when the Prophet passed away and said:

> "There are hypocrite men who allege that the Messenger of God has died. Certainly the Messenger of God did not die, but he went to his Lord as Moses, son of 'Imran, went to his Lord (for receiving the Heavenly commandments). By God, Muhammad will return as Moses returned, and he shall sever the hands and legs of the men who alleged that the Messenger of Allah has died." (Ibn Hisham, Al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah, part 2, page 655)

We cannot say that 'Umar took this idea from Abdullah Ibn Saba or any other person. Ibn Saba did not even exist at that time, not even in the imagination of Sayf bin 'Umar al-Tamimi, who invented the entire allegation.

The Shi'ite school of thought does not consider the Prophet's return a part of Islamic belief. If any Muslim believes in this, it would only be logical to say that the source of this doctrine is the second Caliph's speech on the day the Messenger of God died, rather than Ibn Saba.

The Doctrine Of Ali's Executorship

The dividers of Muslims alleged that Ibn Saba is the one who invented the doctrine of Ali's executorship. Yet history testifies that the Messenger of God himself is the one who declared that Ali would be his executor.

Imam Ali reported the following:

> When the Qur'anic verse: "And warn your closest relatives" was revealed, the Messenger of God called me and said: "Ali, certainly Allah commanded me to warn my closest relatives, and I feel the difficulty of this mission. I know that when I confront them with this warning, I will not like their response." The

> Prophet invited the members of his clan to dine with him on a small amount of food and little milk. There were forty of them. After they ate, the Prophet spoke to them:
>
> "Children of Abdul Muttalib, by God, I do not know of any young man from the Arabs who brought to his people better than I brought to you. I have brought to you the goodness of this world and the Hereafter. The Almighty commanded me to invite you to it. Who among you will assist me on this mission and become my brother, executor, and successor?"
>
> No one accepted the invitation, and I said: "Messenger of God, I shall be your assistant." He held my neck and said to them: "This is my brother, executor, and successor. Listen to him and obey him." They laughed, saying to Abu Talib: He (Muhammad) commanded you to listen to your son and to obey him. (al-Tabari, al-Ta'rikh, part 2, pages 319-21)

This hadith was reported by Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn Mardawayh, and Al-Bayhaqi in his book aI-Dala'il. This was also reported by a number of historians including Abu al-Fida and Ibn al-Athir. In addition, Muhammad Hussein Haykal recorded it in his book Hayat Muhammad (first edition).

Here we should ask the following question:

Imam Ali reported that the Messenger of God is the one who granted him the office of executorship, brotherhood, and successorship. Sayf Ibn 'Umar reported that the idea of the executorship of Ali had come from a Jew called Abdullah Ibn Saba. We should ask the members of the Takfeer University (who call everyone who disagrees with them "Kafir"-unbeliever) the following question: Do you believe Imam Ali's report or Sayf Ibn 'Umar's? Sayf was accused by prominent Sunnite scholars of weakness, forgery, and heresy.

Of course, we should not expect any true Muslim to choose the report of a liar such as Sayf Ibn 'Umar and reject the report of the Imam of the faithfuls, Ali Ibn Abi Talib, the brother of the Prophet. The Messenger of God once said to Ali:

> "Would you not be pleased to be to me like Aaron was to Moses, but there shall be no Prophet after me?" (al-Bukhari in his Sahih reported this through his channel to Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas, part 6, page 3). Muslim also reported this in his Sahih, part 15, page 176.

Hadith Al-Ghadir

Do the mercenary writers who endeavor to spread hostility among Muslims forget that while

returning from his farewell pilgrimage, and in the presence of over a hundred thousand pilgrims, the Messenger of God declared:

> "Do I not have more right over the believers than they have over themselves?"
>
> "They answered: 'Yes, Messenger of God.'
>
> "The Prophet held up the hand of Ali and said:
>
> 'Whoever I am his Mawla (leader), this Ali is his Mawla. God, love whoever loves him, and be hostile to whoever is hostile to him.' "

No Muslim would doubt that the Messenger of God is the leader of all Muslims from all generations. The Prophet in his statement granted Ali the same position as his when he said that Ali is the leader of everyone who follows the Prophet.

This declaration which was reported by about a hundred companions does not just indicate that Ali is the executor of the Prophet, but also indicates that Ali takes the place of the Messenger in the leadership of all Muslims. However, these mercenaries still allow themselves to say that the belief that Ali was the executor of the Messenger had come through a Jew who declared his Islam during the days of 'Uthman.

The Mercenaries Try To Defame The Two Beloved Companions Of The Prophet, Abu Dharr And Ammar Ibn Yasir

The mercenary workers did not even hesitate to attack the outstanding companions, Abu Dharr and Ammar. They said that Abu Dharr and Ammar met the imaginary Jew Ibn Saba, were affected by his propaganda, and thus turned against 'Uthman.

They say this while history testifies that Abu Dharr said to 'Uthman in the presence of Ka'b Al-Ahbar:

> "Do not be satisfied that people do no harm to others. They should try to assist one another. It could be that the person who pays Zakat should do more. He should assist his neighbors and Muslim brothers and be generous to his relatives."

Ka'b Al-Ahbar said:

> "Whoever performs his duty would be free of any other additional charitable spending."

Abu Dharr immediately took his cane and hit Ka'b on the neck injuring him and said: "Son of a Jewish lady, are you trying to teach us our religion?"

With such a firmness in religion which made Abu Dharr hit and injure Ka'b (who was highly respected by 'Umar and 'Uthman) because he tried to give a verdict in the Islamic religion, it is inconceivable that Abu Dharr would learn from the imaginary Ibn Saba, who never met 'Uthman or any other caliph before him.

The dividers of Muslims do not hesitate to attack Abu Dharr and Ammar by saying that they were affected by Ibn Saba. However, we should not forget that by their attacking two prominent companions, they actually are attacking the Messenger of God who attested to their purity and righteousness.

Ibn Majah, in his authentic Sunan, reported that the Messenger of God said:

> "Certainly Allah commanded me to love four persons and informed me that He loves them."
>
> The companions asked the Prophet:
>
> "Messenger of God, who are these four persons?"
>
> The Prophet said:
>
> "Ali is from them (repeating that three times), Abu Dharr, Salman, and Al-Miqdad." (part 1, page 52, hadith No.149)

Al-Tirmidhi, in his authentic Sunan, reported that the Messenger said:

> "Every prophet was given by God seven righteous companions. I was given fourteen righteous companions." He included in them Ammar and Al-Miqdad. (part 5, page 329, hadith 3877)

Al -Tirmidhi also reported that the Prophet said:

> "Heaven has not shaded, nor has the earth carried a truer person than Abu Dharr. He walks on earth with the immaterialistic attitude of Jesus, son of Mary." (part 5, page 334, hadith 3889)

Ibn Majah, in his authentic Sunan, reported that Imam Ali said: "I was sitting in the house of the Prophet and Ammar asked to see him. The Prophet said 'Welcome the good and the

purified.'"

Ibn Majah also reported that 'A'ishah reported that the Messenger of God said "Whenever Ammar is given two alternatives, he always chooses the most righteous of the two."

Al-Tirmidhi, in his authentic Sunan, reported that the Messenger of God witnessed Ammar and his two parents tortured in Mecca. The Prophet said to them:

> "Members of Yasir's family, be patient. Your destination is paradise. (part 5, page 233)

Thus, Ammar and his parents were the first people to be declared by the Prophet to be dwellers of Paradise.

Here we should say: When a Muslim knows that the Prophet has commended these two important companions so highly, and if he is a believer in the truthfulness of Muhammad, he does not allow himself to insult these two companions. Such an insult discredits the Prophet.

We find that the hostility of Sayf Ibn 'Umar Al-Tamimi, who lived during the second century after the Prophet, and the hostility of his students towards the Shi'ites motivated them to spread cheap propaganda. Sayf knew that attributing the revolt against 'Uthman to the work of Ibn Saba contradicted known historical facts which show that the two companions,

Abu Dharr and Ammar, were opposed to 'Uthman 's ever coming to power. Because Sayf knew of their opposition to 'Uthman, he tried to smear their reputations by adding the names of the two prominent companions to the list of students of the imaginary Jew.

If Ibn Saba ever existed he, according to the tale of Sayf Ibn 'Umar, had declared his Islam after 'Uthman came to power. Abu Dharr and Ammar Ibn Yasir, on the other hand, had been opposed to 'Uthman's caliphate before he came to power. The two companions were followers of the Imam Ali. They were firm believers that he was appointed by the Prophet to be his successor.

Since this was their belief before Ibn Saba's existence, Sayf's story about their being influenced by Ibn Saba is unfounded and untrue.

Thus, in order to clear the third caliph from all the accusations pertaining to his ill-management of the Islamic treasury, Sayf accused the revolters of being students of Ibn Saba. He then completed his story by adding the two companions to the class of Ibn Saba's students, intentionally overlooking the fact that the two companions belong to the first successful class of the school of the Prophet Muhammad. They were among the important companions who were honored by the Prophet.

In the end, Sayf was led by his untrue story to reject the testimony of the Prophet. By this, Sayf had disproved his whole tale.

Who Is Sayf Ibn 'Umar?

The books that deal with the reporters of hadiths inform us that Sayf was a well-known liar.

Ibn Ma'in (died in 233 AH) said: Sayf is weak.

Abu Hatim (died in 277 AH) said: Sayf's hadith is rejected.

Al-Nisa'i (died in 303 AH) said: Sayf is weak.

Abu Dawud (died in 216 AH) said: Sayf is nothing. Some of his hadiths were conveyed and the majority of them are denied.

Ibn Hibban said: Sayf attributed fabricated hadiths to good reporters. He was accused of being a heretic.

Al-Darqutni (died in 385 AH) said: Sayf is weak.

Al-Hakim Al-Nisaburi (died in 405 AH) said: Sayf is accused of being a heretic.

Ibn Abd Al-Barr (died in 462 AH) said in his writing abut Al-Qa'qa': Sayf reported that Al-Qa'qa' said: I attended the death of the Prophet Muhammad.

Ibn Abd Al-Barr also said: Ibn Abi Hatim said: Sayf is weak. Thus, what was conveyed of the presence of Al-Qa'qa' at the death of the Prophet is rejected.

Ibn Hajar (died in 850 AH) said: Sayf's hadith is weak.

Al-Suyuti (died in 900 AH) said after conveying a hadith: "Many reporters of this hadith are weak and the weakest among them is Sayf."

(Sayyid Murtada Al-Askari, Abdullah Ibn Saba, pages 27-28)

I should mention that Al-Askari had a very distinguished achievement. He proved beyond any doubt, in his book Abdullah Ibn Saba, that Ibn Saba never existed, and that he was invented by Sayf Ibn 'Umar.

Was Ibn Saba the Organizer of the Revolt Against 'Uthman in Basra, Kufa, and Egypt?

Should a reader of Islamic history be liberated from his emotions towards or against the Third Caliph, he can be assured that the call for a revolt against the Caliph did not start in Basra, Kufa, Syria, or Egypt.

The agitation against the Caliph started in Medina by prominent and influential individuals. The most prominent among them were 'A'ishah, the mother of believers, Talhah, Zubayr, Abdul Rahman Ibn Awf, Amr Ibn al-As, and Ammar Ibn Yasir.

The Third Caliph, 'Uthman, was given the allegiance of the people with the stipulation that he would manage the affairs of the nation according to the Book of God and the teachings of the Prophet. He was to follow the method of Abu Bakr and 'Umar, if there was no instruction from the Qur'an or the Prophet.

It is well-known that the first two caliphs lived very simple lives. They did not give members of their clans a preference over other people, nor did they appoint any of their relatives to prominent positions in the State.

'Uthman, on the other hand, had his own opinions. He allowed himself to live luxuriously. He put members of his clan in prominent and strong positions in the State, preferring them over other Muslims. However, his relatives were not righteous. 'Uthman thought that his preference towards them was in accordance with the Book of God because the Qur'an urges people to be kind to their relatives. This method of handling the affairs of the State did not please many companions. They found it extravagant and extreme.

They criticized the Caliph for the following things:

(1). He brought his uncle Al-Hakam Ibn Al-As, (son of Umayyah, son of Abd Shams), to Medina after the Prophet had exiled him from Medina.

It was reported that Al-Hakam used to hide and listen to the words of the Prophet as he spoke secretly to prominent companions and circulated what he heard. He used to imitate and ridicule the Prophet in the way he walked. The Prophet one time looked at him while he was

being imitated and said: "This way you will be." Al-Hakam started immediately shaking and continued that way until he died.

One day, while sitting with some of his companions, the Messenger of God said, "A cursed man will enter the room." Shortly thereafter, Al-Hakam entered. He was the cursed man. (Yusuf Ibn Abd Al-Barr, AI-Isti'ab, part one, pages 359-360)

(2). After bringing him to Medina, 'Uthman gave his uncle Al-Hakam 300,000 dirhams.

(3). He made Marwan, son of Al-Hakam, his highest assistant and top advisor, giving him influence equal to his own. Marwan bought a fifth of the spoils of North Africa for 500,000 dinars. However, he did not pay this amount. The Caliph allowed him to keep the money. This amount was equal to ten million dollars.

(4). The Caliph appointed his foster brother Abdullah Ibn Sa'd governor of Egypt. At that time, Egypt was the largest province in the Muslim State.

Ibn Sa'd had declared his Islam and moved from Mecca to Medina. The Prophet enlisted him as a recorder of the revelation. However, Ibn Sa'd then deserted the faith and returned to Mecca. He used to say: "I shall reveal equal to what God revealed to Muhammad."

When Mecca was conquered, the Prophet ordered the Muslims to kill Ibn Sa'd. He was to be killed even if he was found tying himself to the cloth of the Ka'bah. Ibn Sa'd hid himself at the house of 'Uthman. When the situation calmed down, 'Uthman brought Ibn Sa'd to the Prophet and informed him that he had put Ibn Sa'd under his protection. The Prophet remained silent for a long while, hoping that one of those present would kill Ibn Sa'd before he honored 'Uthman's request. The companions, however, did not understand what the Prophet meant by his long silence. Since no one moved to kill Ibn Sa'd, the Prophet approved the protection of 'Uthman.

(5). The Caliph 'Uthman appointed Al-Walid Ibn 'Uqbah (one of his Umayyad relatives), governor of Kufa after dismissing the previous governor, the famous companion Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas. Sa'd was a famous marksman known for combating enemies of Islam in front of the Prophet at the Battle of Uhud. The Prophet prayed for him saying:

> "Lord, I ask Thee to make his arrow accurate as I ask Thee to respond to his prayer."

Walid's past during the time of the Prophet was not honorable. The Qur'an discredited him and called him a transgressor. For instance, the Messenger sent him to Banu Al-Mustalaq to collect their Zakat. Walid witnessed from a distance the Mustalaqites coming toward him on their horses. He became frightened due to a previous hostility between the Mustalaqites and

him. He returned to the Messenger of God and informed him that the Mustalaqites wanted to kill him. This was not true. However, Walid's information infuriated the Medinite Muslims, and they wanted to attack the Mustalaqites. At this time, the following revelation came down:

> "Oh you believe, if a transgressor comes to you with news, try to verify it, lest you inflict damage on people unwittingly; then you may consequently regret your hasty action. (ch. 49, v.6)

Walid continued in his non-Islamic way for the rest of his life. He used to drink wine and several witnesses testified to the Caliph that they had witnessed Walid drunk while leading a congregational prayer. Upon the testimony of good witnesses, Walid was lashed eighty times and was dismissed by the Caliph. The Caliph was expected to replace this transgressor with a good companion of the Prophet but, instead, he replaced Walid with Sa'id Ibn al-As, one of his Umayyad relatives.

The Companions Of Medina Wrote To The Companions Outside Medina

Al -Tabari reported that when people witnessed what 'Uthman had done, the companions living in Medina wrote to the companions living in other provinces:

> "You have left Medina to endeavor in the way of God and promote the religion of Muhammad. The religion of Muhammad has been corrupted. Come back and straighten the religion of Muhammad."

The companions came from every province and killed the Caliph. (Al-Tabari, al-Ta'rikh, part 4, page 367)

Talhah

Talhah Ibn Ubaydullah was one of the biggest agitators against 'Uthman. It is reported that Imam Ali said to Talhah:

> "I ask you in the name of Allah to deter people from attacking 'Uthman."
>
> Talhah retorted: "No, by God, until the Umayyad returns to the people their rights." 'Uthman was the head of the Umayyads. (Al-Tabari, page 405)

'Uthman was besieged in Medina while Imam Ali was in Khaybar. The Imam came to Medina and found people gathering at the residence of Talhah, one of the influential people in Medina. 'Uthman came to Imam Ali and said:

> "You owe me my Islamic right and the right of brotherhood and relationship. If

> I have none of these rights and if I were in the pre-Islamic era, it would still be a shame for a descendant of Abd-Manaf (of whom both Ali and 'Uthman are descendants) to let a man of Taym (Talhah) rob us of our authority." Imam Ali said to 'Uthman: "You shall be informed of what I do." The Imam went to Talhah's house. There were a lot of people there. Imam Ali spoke to Talhah saying: "Talhah, what is this predicament in which you have fallen?"
>
> Talhah said: "Abu al-Hasan, it is too late." The Imam went to the treasury and ordered people to open it. Unable to find the key, he broke the door and distributed some of the money among the people. People then deserted Talhah. 'Uthman was very pleased.
>
> Talhah came to 'Uthman and said: "Amir Al-Mu'minin, I tried to do something but Allah prevented me from doing it."
>
> 'Uthman said: "By God, you did not come as repenter; you came only because you were defeated. May God punish you for your intention." (Ibn Al-Athir, AI-Kamil, part 3, page 84).

Al-Tabari reported in his history that when 'Uthman was besieged, Ibn Abbas came to see him. 'Uthman said: "Ibn Abbas, come with me." He made him listen to some of the conversations among the besiegers outside the house. They witnessed Talhah pass and ask the people: "Where is Ibn 'Udays (the leader of the Egyptian revolters)?"

Ibn 'Udays came and conferred secretly with Talhah. Ibn 'Udays then returned to his group and said: "Do not let anyone enter or leave 'Uthman's house."

'Uthman said to Ibn Abbas: "This is an order from Talhah. God, I ask Thee to take care of Talhah Ibn Ubaydullah. He instigated these people against me. By God, I hope his share of the caliphate is zero and that his blood is shed." (Al-Tabari, part 4, page 379)

'Aishah

Talhah was not the only collaborator against 'Uthman. His cousin, 'A'ishah, was collaborating and campaigning against 'Uthman as well. She was hopeful that Talhah would be the successor to 'Uthman. She said to Ibn Abbas while both were performing the pilgrimage:

> "Ibn Abbas, you are endowed with an effective tongue. I ask you in the name of God not to try to scatter people away from Talhah by putting doubt in their minds. The situation of 'Uthman has become obvious. People have come from many locations for something big that is about to happen. I know that Talhah Ibn Ubaydullah has acquired the keys of the treasury houses. If Talhah

succeeds 'Uthman, he will follow the path of his cousin Abu Bakr . . ." (Al-Tabari, page 407)

Al-Baladhuri in his history (Ansab Al-Ashraf) said that when the situation became extremely grave, 'Uthman ordered Marwan Ibn Al-Hakam and Abdul Rahman Ibn Attab Ibn Asid to try to dissuade 'A'ishah from campaigning against him. They went to her while she was preparing to leave for pilgrimage and said:

> "We pray that you stay in Medina and that Allah may through you save this man ('Uthman)."
>
> 'A'ishah said: "I have prepared my means of transportation and vowed to perform the pilgrimage. By God, I shall not honor your request."

Marwan and Ibn Attab stood up and Marwan said: "Bishr built the fire to stir up the people against me; and when the fire became large he left the scene."

'A'ishah said:

> "Marwan, I wish that he ('Uthman) was in one of my sacks, and that I could carry him. I would then throw him into the sea." (AI-Baladhuri, part 1 of Vol.4, page 75)

Certainly the revolution against the Third Caliph started in Medina, not in Basra, Kufa, or Egypt. The prominent people of Medina are the ones who wrote to those outside of Medina and instigated them against 'Uthman. To say that a Jew named Ibn Saba is the one who inspired people to revolt against the Caliph is not logical unless we say he is the one who inspired 'A'ishah, Talhah, and Zubayr to revolt. But those who speak of Ibn Saba and his role do not include 'A'ishah and the people of her position as followers of Ibn Saba.

The alleged role of Ibn Saba, in the revolt against 'Uthman, would also be credible if we were to say that Ibn Saba was the one who persuaded the Caliph to follow a path contrary to that of the first two Caliphs, and that he was the one who advised 'Uthman to give Islamic funds to his relatives and appoint them governors of Islamic provinces.

The manner in which 'Uthman conducted the affairs of the Islamic State gave 'A'ishah, along with Talhah, Zubayr, and others, reason to instigate the Muslims against 'Uthman. However, those who attribute the revolution against 'Uthman to Ibn Saba do not accept that Ibn Saba was the one who advised 'Uthman to follow that wrong policy. They are correct, because that alleged Jew never existed except in the imagination of Sayf Ibn 'Umar Al-Tamimi.

It is amazing that such an important role in the revolution against 'Uthman is attributed to a

man whose existence has no evidence. Yet historians forget the important role which was played by a person well known in Islamic history, namely: Amr Ibn Al-As. He was more intelligent and more clever than any Jew that ever existed in that era. Amr had all the reasons to conspire against the Caliph and he had all the abilities to instigate most of the Medinite personalities against him.

Amr Ibn Al-As

Amr Ibn Al-As was one of the most dangerous agitators against 'Uthman. He was the governor of Egypt during the reign of the second Caliph. However, the Third Caliph dismissed him and replaced him with his foster brother Abdullah Ibn Sa'd Ibn Abi Sarh. Amr became extremely hostile towards 'Uthman. He returned to Medina and started a malicious campaign against the Third Caliph, accusing him of many wrong doings. 'Uthman blamed Amr and spoke to him harshly. This made Amr even more bitter. He used to meet Zubayr and Talhah and conspire against 'Uthman. He used to meet the pilgrims and inform them of the numerous deviations of 'Uthman. When 'Uthman was besieged, Amr left Medina and went to Palestine. He rested in an area called Al-Saba. He dwelt in a palace called Al-Ajlan. He would repeatedly say "I wonder what news is coming about 'Uthman."

While he was at his palace accompanied by his two sons Muhammad and Abdullah, along with Salamah Ibn Zanba'a Al-Juthami, a traveler passed by. Amr called him and the following conversation took place:

Q. Where did you come from?
A. From Medina.
Q. What is 'Uthman doing?
A. I left him heavily besieged.

As soon as Amr finished his conversation with the traveler, another traveler appeared. Amr asked:

Q. What is 'Uthman doing?
A. He was killed.

Amr retorted saying:

> "I am Abu Abdullah. When I scratch an ulcer, I cut it. I used to campaign against him vehemently. I even instigated the shepherds at the top of the mountains to revolt against him."

Salamah Ibn Zanba'a Al-Juthami said:

> "You, the Qurayshites, have broken a strong door between yourselves and the Arabs. Why did you do this?"

Amr answered: "We wanted to bring the truth out of the falsehood." (AI-Tabari, part 4, pages 356-57)

The dividers of Muslims ignored what is well-known in the history of Islam and which was reported by a host of good reporters. The revolution against 'Uthman was a result of the efforts of prominent personalities in Medina, such as 'A'ishah, Talhah, Zubayr, Abdul Rahman Ibn Awf, and Amr Ibn Al-As. Instead of attributing the revolution to real people who rebelled against 'Uthman and brought about the revolution, the dividers of the Muslims refuse to accept the truth or mention it. They attribute the revolution to an imaginary Jew, relying on the report of Sayf Ibn 'Umar Al-Tamimi, a man who was accused by prominent Sunni scholars to be a man of lies and deviations. They chose to accept Sayf's report in order to cover up for the Caliph, 'A'ishah, Talhah, and Zubayr.

It is even more amazing that 'A'ishah, Talhah, Zubayr, and Mu'awiyah Ibn Abi Sufyan fought the Imam in two wars, unprecedented in the history of Islam. They were the most zealous to smear the reputation of Imam Ali and his followers. Yet the opponents of Imam Ali did not accuse his supporters of being students of Ibn Saba.

History clearly states that Mu'awiyah commanded all the Imams of the mosques throughout the Muslim World to curse Imam Ali at every Friday prayer. If the imaginary Ibn Saba had any small role in the revolution against 'Uthman, Mu'awiyah would have made it the main topic of his defamation campaign against the Imam and his supporters. He would have publicized throughout the Muslim World that those who killed 'Uthman were students of Ibn Saba and that they were the ones who brought Ali to power. However, neither Mu'awiyah nor 'A'ishah took this route because Ibn Saba's story was invented by Sayf Ibn 'Umar Al-Tamimi who lived in the second Hijra century after their death.

Who Started The Battle Of Basra?

The circulators of false accusations against the followers of the members of the House of the Prophet say that the followers of Ibn Saba started the battle of Basra at night just before the negotiations between Imam Ali and his three opponents ('A'ishah, Talhah, and Zubayr) were about to succeed. They started the battle at night by attacking the two armies simultaneously in order to make them plunge into battle. This would abort the peaceful efforts whose stipulations were supposed to include the punishment of 'Uthman's killers. This allegation is opposed to many clear historical facts of which the following events were recorded by Al-Tabari in his history (part 4).

(1). Al-Shi'abi reported the following:

"The right side of Amir Al-Mu'mineen 's army attacked the left side of Basra's army. They fought each other and people resorted to 'A'ishah and most of them were from Dabba and Al-Azd tribes."

"The Battle started after sunrise and continued until afternoon. This means that the fight did not start during the night as the inventors of Ibn Saba claim. The Basrites were defeated and a man from the tribe of Al-Azd said:

'Come back and attack.' Muhammad, son of Imam Ali (Ibn Al-Hanafiyya), hit him with his sword and severed his hand. The man shouted: 'Azdites, run away.' When the Azdites were overwhelmed by the army of the Imam, the Azdites shouted: 'We belong to the religion of Ali Ibn Abi Talib.' " (Al- Tabari, page 312)

(2). The report of Qatadah said:

"When the two armies faced each other, Zubayr appeared on his horse while he was well armed. People said to the Imam, 'This is Zubayr.' The Imam said: Zubayr is the more expected of the two to remember God, if he is reminded." Talhah also came to face the Imam. When Imam Ali faced them, he said:

"Certainly you have prepared arms, horses, and men. Did you prepare an excuse for the Day of Judgement when you meet your Lord? Fear God and do not be like the lady who unravels her weaving after she had woven it strongly. Was I not your brother and you used to believe in the sanctity of my blood? Did anything happen to make it legal for you to shed my blood?"

Talhah said:

"You have instigated people against 'Uthman," Imam Ali retorted, quoting from the Qur'an:

"On the Day of Judgement, Allah will pay them their just due, and they will know that He (Allah) is the Manifest truth."

The Imam continued:

"Talhah, you are fighting for the blood of 'Uthman? May God curse those who killed 'Uthman.

"Zubayr, do you remember the day when you passed by with the Messenger of

God at Banu Ghunam and he looked at me and smiled? I smiled back at him and you said to him: 'Ibn Abi Talib is always conceited.' The Messenger of God said to you: 'He is not conceited, and you shall fight him unjustly.'"

Zubayr retorted:

"By God, this is true. Had I remembered that, I would not have made this journey. By God, I shall never fight you."

Zubayr left and informed 'A'ishah and his son Abdullah that he took an oath never to fight Imam Ali. His son counseled him to fight the Imam and pay atonement. Zubayr agreed and made his atonement by freeing his slave Makhul. (Al-Tabari, pages 501-502)

This event tells us that Talhah and Zubayr confronted the Imam before the start of the battle, and the confrontation was in the day time rather than at night. Otherwise, people could not have seen the confrontation or heard the conversation between the Imam and his opponents. We are sure that there was no electricity for light, nor was there any voice amplifier to make conversations heard.

Since the conversation and the confrontation took place before the start of the battle, it is clear that the report of Sayf about the battle starting during the dark night is a sheer lie.

(3). Al-Zuhri reported that Imam Ali had a dialogue with Zubayr and Talhah before the battle. He said that the Imam said:

"Zubayr, do you fight me for the blood of 'Uthman after you killed him? (by his instigation) May God give the most hostile to 'Uthman among us the consequence which he dislikes. He said to Talhah: 'Talhah, you have brought the wife of the Messenger of God ('A'ishah) to use her for war and hid your wife at your house (in Medina)! Did you not give me your allegiance?'"

Talhah said:

"I gave you the allegiance while the sword was on my neck."

At this point, the Imam tried to invite them to peace, leaving them no excuse. He addressed his army saying:

"Who among you will display this Qur'an and what is in it to the opposing army with the understanding that if he loses his hand he will hold the Qur'an with his other hand...?"

A youth from Kufa said: "I will take the mission."

The Imam went through his army offering them the mission. Only the youth accepted it. The Imam said to him:

> "Exhibit this Qur'an and say to them: 'It is between you and us from its beginning to its end. Remember God, and spare your blood and our blood.'"

As the youth called upon them to resort to the Qur'an and surrender to its judgement, the Basrites attacked and killed him. At this time, Imam Ali said to his army: "Now the fight has become legal." The battle started. (Al-Tabari, page 905)

All these reports clearly indicate that the battle started in the day time rather than at night, as Sayf Ibn 'Umar has alleged. Had the confrontation between Imam Ali and Talhah and Zubayr taken place at night, it would have had no benefit because the two armies would not have been able to witness it or hear their conversation. Also, the confrontation between the carrier of the Holy Qur'an and the Basrites would have been useless. None of the opposing soldiers could have seen the Qur'an in the hands of the young man at night.

Furthermore, the alleged agreement between the Imam and the three leaders, to punish the ones who shared in 'Uthman's murder, would be logical only if the three leaders were serious in seeking punishment for the killers. But the three leaders were the main agitators who induced people to kill the Third Caliph.

Had the revolters elected Talhah or Zubayr instead of the Imam as Caliph, they would have given the killers of 'Uthman the biggest prize. Certainly the leaders did not seek revenge for the blood of 'Uthman. They only pretended to do that as a means of destroying the Imam's caliphate.

Did Muslims Other Than Shi'ites Borrow Religious Teachings from Jews?

To discuss the relationship between the Muslims and Jews, it is necessary to divide Islamic history into three distinct eras and review each separately. The three divisions are:

1. Islam during the time of the Prophet.
2. Islam during the time of the first three caliphs.
3. Islam during the present era.

The Muslims And Jews During The Days Of The Prophet Muhammad

There were many battles between the Messenger of God and the Jews of Al-Hijaz. Many Jewish communities signed pacts with the Prophet. However, they breached the agreements. This made military confrontations with the Islamic force inevitable. The covenant breachers used to flee to Khaybar after their defeat. Thus, Khaybar fortresses were to the Hijazi Jews places of aggregation and fortification.

The Prophet decided to remove the danger of the fortresses, and the battle of Khaybar took place. The battle was the main and final confrontation between the Prophet and the Jews.

Who Defeated The Jews In Khaybar?

Muslim historians recorded that after the besiegment of Khaybar had continued for a long time and the army's supplies ran out, the prophet gave the banner to Abu Bakr.

Abu Bakr was unable to conquer any of the fortresses of Khaybar. On the following day, the Prophet gave the banner to 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab. There was an unsuccessful battle with the Khaybarites which ended with the defeat of 'Umar and the army. They returned to the Messenger bickering and accusing each other of being cowards. (AI-Tabari, part 3, page 12)

The Conquering Commander Who Was Loved By Allah And His Messenger

The Messenger of God was saddened by the defeat of his banner and army on two consecutive days under the leadership of two prominent companions (Abu Bakr and 'Umar). Thus, the Messenger declared the following:

> "By God, tomorrow I shall give the banner to a man who loves God and His Messenger, and who is loved by God and His Messenger. He shall take Khaybar by force."

Many Qurayshite companions wished to be the one so highly praised by the Prophet. Imam Ali, at that time, had sore eyes and, therefore, was not expected to be the chosen man. The following day, though, he was brought before the Prophet. The Prophet medicated and cured the Imam's eyes with his blessed saliva. The Imam never complained about his eyes again.

Military tradition demands that the army confronts the enemy ahead of the commander. Imam Ali did the opposite. He ran ahead of the army towards the Jewish fortress. A group of Jews, led by their hero Marhab, came out of the fortress to face the Imam. Imam Ali swiftly annihilated Marhab. Marhab's men ran back to the fortress and closed the heavy door. The Imam, with his bare hands, unhinged the gate and went after them. While fighting, a man hit the shield of the Imam and made him lose it. So, the Imam held the door with his hand and used it as a shield until he finished the battle and defeated the Khaybarites. When the Imam left the door, the companions discovered a miracle:

Abu Rafi'a, a companion of the Prophet, said the following:

> "I, along with seven other men, tried to turn the door but we failed." (Ibn Hisham, AI-Sirah Al-Nabawiyyah, part 2, pages 234-35; also Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab, Al-Tawhid, pages 11-12)

This unique event in history shows us that Imam Ali was a formidable opponent of the Jews and that he was the one who defeated them. Thus, the Almighty opened the fortress of Khaybar at the hand of Ali before the entire Islamic army had arrived. This also shows us that an Islamic army composed of 14 hundred warriors, led by two prominent companions, could not enter the fortress of the Khaybarites, but the great Imam was able to defeat the Jewish forces all by himself.

The Muslims And The Jews During The Period Of The Three Caliphs

The attitude that Imam Ali and those who followed him took towards new converts from people of the scripture was an alert attitude which tried to keep the purity of Islamic teachings. They did not listen to allegations from those who adopted Islam and claimed to have knowledge in religion through the Old Testament and wanted to pass it on to Islam.

This sober attitude was taken by Imam Ali and his followers while prominent companions, including the Caliphs, were deceived by scriptural scholars. The following is an example of such allegations:

Ka'b Al-Ahbar

A man from Yemen named Ka'b Ibn Mati' Al-Himyari, also nicknamed Abu Ishaq, from the clan of Dhu Ru'ayn (or the clan of Dhu Al-Kila'a) came to Medina during the time of 'Umar. He was a prominent Rabbi and became known as Ka'b Al-Ahbar. He declared his Islam and resided in Medina during 'Umar's reign. He stayed in Medina until the days of 'Uthman.

This new Muslim was not an imaginary person as the Jew Abdullah Ibn Saba, who is portrayed by legend as being a mysterious person and difficult to prove that he ever existed.

Indeed, Ka'b Al-Ahbar was a real person; many companions knew him because he resided in Medina and was looked upon with high prestige by the second and the third Caliphs. He narrated many stories, claiming that they were from the contents of the Old Testament. Many famous companions, such as Abu Hurayrah, Abdullah Ibn 'Umar, Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn Al-As, and Mu'awiyah Ibn Abi Sufyan reported his stories. Ka'b was with 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab when 'Umar entered Jerusalem.

This rabbi reported many strange tales, the contents of which testify for their own lack of authenticity. One such tale is the following:

A companion named Qays Ibn Kharshah Al-Qaysi reported that Ka'b Al-Ahbar said:

> "Every event that has taken place or will take place, on any foot of the earth, is written in the Tawrat (Old Testament), which Allah revealed to His Prophet Moses. (Ibn Abd al-Barr, Al-Isti'ab, part 3, page 1287)

Such a report should arouse the attention of the reader, because it states that which is inconceivable. The earth contains billions of square miles, and each mile contains millions of cubic feet, and each part of the earth may become a place of thousands of events from the time of Moses until the Day of Judgement. Yet, Ka'b al-Ahbar claimed that all these events are recorded in the Old Testament. The parts of the Old Testament which were dictated or written by Moses do not come to 400 pages. Recording all the events of the world, between the time of Moses and the Day of Judgement, may take millions of pages. If we take all that was written in the Old Testament, including the books which are attributed to the Prophets after Moses and before Jesus, it does not amount to more than 900 pages. How could this small number of pages contain the record of billions of events. In fact, if only the events of death and birth alone were recorded from the time of Moses until the Day of Judgement, they would reach astronomical figures.

Furthermore, the pages of the Old Testament do not record future events. All they contain are some past events which took place during or before the time of the biblical Prophets. Considering all these aspects, the claim of Ka'b Al-Ahbar that the Old Testament contains

records of what had happened and what will happen until the Day of Judgement belies itself.

Ka'b Al-Ahbar Counts The Days Of The Caliph 'Umar

This international Rabbi was able to deceive many companions through his trickery. Even a prominent companion such as 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab could not escape his tricks.

Ka'b's influence had grown during the days of 'Umar's caliphate to such a degree that he was able to say to 'Umar:

> "Amir Al-Mu'minin, you ought to write your will because you will die in three days."
>
> 'Umar: "How do you know that?"
>
> Ka'b: "I found it in the Book of God, the Tawrat (Old Testament).
>
> 'Umar: "By God, do you find 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab in the Old Testament?"
>
> Ka'b: "By God, no. But I found your description in the Old Testament and your time is coming to an end."
>
> 'Umar: "But I do not feel any pain or sickness."
>
> On the following day Ka'b came to 'Umar and said:
>
> "Amir Al-Mu'minin, one day has passed and you have only two more days." The following day Ka'b came to him and said: "Amir Al-Mu'minin, two days have gone and you have only one day and one night remaining."
>
> The following morning, 'Umar came out to lead the prayer at the mosque. He used to commission men in order to arrange the rows of worshippers. When they were in a straight line, he started the prayer. Abu Lulu entered the mosque carrying a dagger with two heads and a handle in the middle. He hit 'Umar six times, one of them hit the Caliph in the navel, killing him. (AI-Tabari, part 4, page 191)

Looking at the Old Testament, one does not find any prediction that names or describes 'Umar. Also, no Rabbi, other than Ka'b, ever claimed that the Old Testament predicted the existence of 'Umar, his murder, or defined the time of his death. Had information of this kind been contained in the Tawrat, the Jews would have been very proud of it and would have used

it in an attempt to prove that the Jewish religion is the right religion.

A Part Of The Conspiracy

It seems clear that 'Umar's assassination was a conspiracy, and that Ka'b Al-Ahbar was a part of the plot. The assassination of 'Umar would weaken the Muslims because an outburst of violence against the caliphate would shake the confidence in the Islamic regime and create confusion. Announcing the event before it took place made the companions believe in what Ka'b predicted and what he claimed to be recorded in the Old Testament, therefore, making him a reliable source for future information. Such confidence would enable him to interfere in major events and suggest the name of the future caliph. A number of prominent companions believed the information that Ka'b used to fabricate pertaining to the past and future.

Ka'b did not speak only about events that happened on earth, but he also gave information concerning the heavens and the Divine throne. Al-Qurtubi, in his commentary on the Qur'anic chapter of Ghafir, reported that Ka'b said:

> " When God created His throne, the throne said: 'God did not create any creature greater than me.' The throne then shook itself to show its glory. God roped the throne with a snake which had 70 thousand wings; each wing had 70 thousand feathers; each feather had 70 thousand faces; each face had 70 thousand mouths, and each mouth had 70 thousand tongues. Out of these mouths words glorifying Allah came with a quantity equal to the number of drops of rain that have fallen, and the leaves on the trees, and the number of pieces of gravel and soil, and the number of days of the world, and the number of angels. The snake coiled around the throne, for the throne was much smaller than the snake. The throne was covered by only half the snake."

Imam Ali's Attitude Towards Ka'b

'Umar and a number of prominent companions had a very positive attitude toward Ka'b. However, the most knowledgeable and farsighted among them, namely Imam Ali, discredited Ka'b. Ka'b did not dare come close to him. History, as far as I can determine, does not mention that Ka'b met Imam Ali, in spite of the fact that the Imam was in Medina for the duration of Ka'b's stay. It is reported that Imam Ali said about Ka'b: "Certainly he is a professional liar."

Ka'b Interfered In The Caliphate

Ka'b took advantage of 'Umar's good heartedness and used all of his shrewdness to make 'Umar keep Imam Ali away from the caliphate. Ka'b was motivated by his resentment towards Islam and his hatred of Imam Ali. After all, it was Imam Ali who brought the Jewish

influence in Hijaz to an end at the battle of Khaybar.

It is amazing that the Caliph had so much confidence in Ka'b. He even sought his advice about the future of the caliphate. Ibn Abbas reported that 'Umar said to Ka'b Al-Ahbar, in the presence of Ibn Abbas, the following:

> "I would like to name my successor because my death is near. What do you say about Ali? Give me your opinion and inform me of what you find in your books, because you allege that we are mentioned in them."

Ka'b answered:

> "As to the wisdom of your opinion, it would be unwise to appoint Ali as a successor because he is very religious. He notices every deviation and does not tolerate crookedness. He follows only his own opinion in Islamic rules and this is not a good policy.
>
> "As far as our scriptures, we find that neither he nor his children will come to power. And if he does, there will be confusion."
>
> 'Umar: Why will he not come to power?
>
> Ka'b: Because he has shed blood and Allah has deprived him of authority. When David wanted to erect the walls of the temple in Jerusalem, Allah said to him: 'You shall not build the Temple because you have shed blood. Only Solomon shall erect it.'
>
> 'Umar: Did Ali not shed blood rightly and for the truth?
>
> Ka'b: Amir Al-Mu'minin, David also shed blood for the truth.
>
> 'Umar: Who will come to power according to your scripture?
>
> Ka'b: We find that after the Prophet and his two companions (Abu Bakr and 'Umar), power will be transferred to his enemies (the Umayyads) whom he fought for religion.

When 'Umar heard this, he sadly said: "We belong to God and to Him we shall return." Then he said to Ibn Abbas: "Ibn Abbas, did you hear what Ka'b said? By God, I heard the Messenger of God say something very similar. I heard him say:

> 'The children of Umayyad shall ascend to my pulpit. I have seen them in a dream jumping on my pulpit like monkeys.'

Then the Prophet said that the following verse was revealed about the Umayyads:

> "And We made that dream, which We have shown you, only as a test to the people and the cursed tree in the Qur'an . . ." (Ibn Abi Al-Hadid, in his Commentary on Nahj al-Balaghah, conveying from the dictations of Abu Ja'far Muhammad Ibn Habib, part 12, page 81)

This dialogue should alert us to the deceptive and successful attempt on the part of Ka'b to influence future events by satanic suggestions. It contains a great deal of deception which produced many harmful results to Islam and the Muslims. It is very easy to read the following into this dialogue:

(1). Ka'b was very vindictive towards the Imam because he is the one who smashed the Jewish stronghold in the Arabic Peninsula. Ka'b thought, and rightly so, that if Ali was given the leadership, he would remove all Jewish influence from Arab Society. Therefore, Ka'b was very anxious to have the leadership in the hands of the Umayyads who were unconcerned with the future of Islam. They only concerned themselves with the materialistic aspect of this world. In addition, they were as hostile to Imam Ali as Ka'b. The Umayyads and Ka'b considered Ali their common enemy. He had destroyed their leaders in the defense of Islam.

(2). Ka'b said: "Ali is highly religious and he does not close his eyes on any crookedness; nor does he tolerate any deviation from the Islamic path, and this is not a good policy."

Ka'b either forgot or he deliberately deleted from his story the fact that the Messenger was the most religious and most successful head of state in the history of the world.

(3). Ka'b also said that he found in the scripture that neither Ali nor his children would come to power because he has shed blood. In addition, Ka'b said that it is written in the scripture that David did not build the Temple of Jerusalem because he shed blood and that his son Solomon was destined to build the Temple. Ka'b did not mention and he made the Caliph forget that David, in spite of his shedding blood and being prevented from constructing the Temple, came to power and became a ruling king.

The Holy Qur'an declares that Allah said to David:

> "Oh David, We certainly have made you a Caliph on earth. You should judge between people rightfully . ." (ch. 28, v.26)

Ka'b also forgot that the great Prophet shed the blood of enemies for the truth. In fact, he led

several battles and this did not prevent him from ruling and administering the affairs of the Muslims, nor did it prevent him from building an Islamic state.

(4). Furthermore, Ka'b, by saying that shedding blood prevents coming to power, makes those who endeavor in the name of God less valuable than those who do not endeavor. This contradicts the Holy Qur'an which declares:

> "Those believers who sit still, other than those who have a disabling hurt, are not equal to those who endeavor in the way of Allah with their wealth and lives. Allah has conferred upon those who endeavor for religion with their lives and wealth a rank above those who sit (at home). And to each, Allah has promised good, but He has bestowed on those who strive a great reward above the sedentary: degrees of rank from Him, and forgiveness and mercy. Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Merciful." (ch. 4, v.95)

It would be illogical to think that Allah commands people to endeavor in His way, then punishes the endeavorers by preventing them from coming to power.

(5). It is curious that Ka'b claimed that the Jewish scriptures mention that Islamic leadership would pass from the Prophet and his two companions to his enemies. There is no mention of anything pertaining to this in the Old Testament, in spite of the fact that Ka'b had said to Qays Ibn Kharshah: "There is no place on earth that is not mentioned in the Old Testament, along with the events which will happen at that place until the Day of Judgement."

Ka'b actually did not find in his Jewish scriptures any of the events he fabricated. He only stole what he overheard from the companions of the Prophet. Companions, including 'Umar, reported that the Messenger said:

> "Banu Umayyah shall climb on my pulpit, and I have seen them in a dream jumping on the pulpit like monkeys."

It is amazing that the Caliph heard these words from the Messenger of God and still did not suspect that Ka'b had stolen them and ascribed them to Jewish scripture. Furthermore, Ka'b said that he found in Jewish books that power will be transferred, after the Prophet and his two companions, to the Prophet's enemies. This did not occur. The caliphate passed to 'Uthman after 'Umar, and 'Uthman was not an enemy of the Prophet. He was an outstanding companion. Furthermore, after 'Uthman, contrary to what Ka'b had predicted, the caliphate passed to Imam Ali.

It is more amazing that the Caliph heard all the false statements which Ka'b attributed to the Old Testament and did not even command Ka'b to show him the Jewish Book from which he received his information.

The Second Caliph, with all his prominence, righteousness, and intelligence, took the word of Ka'b as if it came from Heaven and was inevitable. He forgot that the matter of his successor was in his hands. It was entirely up to him to choose Imam Ali or any other person. It was expected that the Second Caliph would please the Prophet by preventing the Umayyads from coming to power after seeing the Prophet deeply disturbed over his dream in which the Umayyads were jumping on his pulpit like monkeys. One word from 'Umar could have changed the course of history.

The Second Caliph could have appointed Ali as a successor and prevented the Umayyads from coming to power. Unfortunately, he kept the Imam away from the caliphate by forming a committee of six members, most of whom were unfriendly to Ali and friendly to 'Uthman, the righteous Umayyad, who was extremely attached to his clan. Contrary to what was expected, however, the Second Caliph did that which Ka'b liked and the Prophet disliked.

Thus, a Jew, newly converted to Islam, claiming that he had knowledge of what was in the past and what will be in the future, was able to change the course of Islamic history through his influence on a prominent caliph, 'Umar. What a historic catastrophe!

Ka'b During The Reign Of The Third Caliph ('Uthman)

The influence of Ka'b continued to grow after the death of 'Umar. During the reign of the Third Caliph, 'Uthman the righteous Umayyad, Ka'b was able to give verdicts in Islamic affairs. The Caliph often agreed with him, and no one among the attendants of the Caliph's meetings would oppose him, except for people like Abu Dharr who became so furious one time upon hearing Ka'b giving verdicts in Islam that he hit him with his rod, saying "Son of a Jewish lady, are you trying to teach us our religion?"

To secure for himself a bigger influence and a better future after the death of 'Uthman, Ka'b tried to please Mu'awiyah by predicting his future arrival to the helm of the Islamic rule. Ibn Al-Athir reported in his Kamil (part 3, page 76) and Al-Tabari reported in his History (part 4, page 343) that while the Caliph 'Uthman was returning from his pilgrimage accompanied by Mu'awiyah and Ka'b, the caravan driver sang a song in which he predicted that Ali would be the successor of 'Uthman. Ka'b belied the singer saying:

> "By God, you lie. The ruler after 'Uthman will be the rider of the blond mule." Ka'b was referring to Mu'awiyah, and he falsely attributed this information to the Old Testament."

With this prediction, Ka'b, the international Jew, took aim at more than one target:

1. He continued his campaign against Imam Ali, trying his best to convince the Third Caliph

to keep the Imam away from power. He had previously succeeded in convincing the Second Caliph to keep the Imam away.

2. He inflamed the ambition of Mu'awiyah to ascend the caliphate.

3. He secured for himself a prominent position with Mu'awiyah. History records that Ka'b moved from Medina to Damascus during the reign of 'Uthman. There he lived in the shadow of Mu'awiyah who befriended him and made him one of his closest associates. Mu'awiyah directed Ka'b to report anything that he considered advantageous to him.

Mahmood Abu Rayyah, in his book Adhwa (lights) on AI-Sunnah AI-Muhammadiyyah, reported that Ibn Hajar Al-'Asqalani, recorded in his book (Al-Isabah, part 5, page 323), that Mu'awiyah ordered Ka'b to narrate to the people of Damascus anything that puts Damascus and its people above other provinces.

We should not forget to mention that Ka'b belied the caravan driver, saying: "By God, you lie. The ruler after 'Uthman will be the rider of the blond mule." This prediction did not come from the Old Testament as Ka'b said. He actually heard it from the good companions who heard it from the mouth of the Prophet when he was informing them of what will happen after his death.

Abu 'Uthman Al-Jahiz, in his book Al-Safyaniyah, reported that Abu Dharr said that he heard the Messenger of God saying:

> "When the man with big eyes, a wide throat, and who eats and never gets full, becomes the ruler of the nation, the nation should be alarmed."

Abu Dharr also reported in the presence of 'Uthman that the Messenger of God said:

> "When the children of Abu Al-As (the Umayyad clan of Marwan) reach the number of 30, they will make the Islamic treasury their own, treat the servants of God as their servants, and stereotype the religion." (the author, Amir Al-Mu'minin, page 431).

It should be mentioned that the Prophet prohibited taking from the book of the people of the scripture.

Ahmad reported that Jabir Ibn Abdullah reported that 'Umar came to the Prophet with a book which he obtained from some followers of the scripture. He read it in front of the Prophet. The Prophet became furious and said: "Son of Al-Khattab, by the One in Whose hand is my soul, if Moses were alive, he would have to follow me."

Al-Bukhari reports that Ibn Abbas said:

> "How do you ask the people of the scriptures about anything while your book, which was revealed by Allah to His Messenger (Muhammad), is the newest Book? You read it pure without interpolation by any non-Qur'anic words. The Qur'an has informed you that people of the scripture tampered with and changed their book."

However, Abu Hurayrah and Abdullah Ibn Amr Ibn al-As reported that the Messenger of God said:

> "Take from the Israelites, and you will not be committing a sin."

Both Abu Hurayrah and Abdullah were students of Ka'b.

It is reported that Abdullah Ibn Amr Al-As acquired two camels loaded with books of people of the scripture and used to give information to Muslims from these books.

Ibn Hajar said:

> "Because of this, many prominent scholars among the students of the companions of the Prophet avoided taking information from Abdullah Ibn Amr Al-As (Fath Al-Bari, part 1, page 167).

Sayyid Muhammad Rashid Rida, in his magazine Al-Manar of Egypt, said about Ka'b (correcting those who stated that Ka'b is very knowledgeable):

"Being extremely knowledgeable does not necessarily mean being truthful." Ka'b's knowledge was attributed to the Old Testament so that it would be accepted. He also reported from other books and attributed these reports to the Old Testament to make them acceptable.

Sayyid Muhammad Rashid Rida added that Ka'b was undoubtedly one of the most intelligent Rabbis before declaring his Islam and very capable of deceiving the Muslims.

Sayyid Muhammad Rida also said that Ka'b was one of the Jewish heretics who displayed Islam and worshipped only to make his religious reports and opinions accepted. His conspiracy became popular and it deceived some of the companions. When some of the companions conveyed Ka'b's reports without attributing them to him, some of their students and people after them took the reports as the words of the Prophet Muhammad. The scholar and journalist Sayyid Rida said "Ka'b was a volcano of fabricated hadiths. I am sure that he was a liar and I have no confidence in his Islam." (Al-Manar magazine, part 27, page 541)

Sayyid Rashid Rida said about Ka'b Al-Ahbar and Wahb Ibn Munabbih the following:

> "These two men were the worst Israelite reporters and the most deceptive to the Muslims. All fairy tales pertaining to Islam, to the creation, the Prophets and their words, faith-testing trials, and the Day of Judgement, have no other source than these two men."
>
> They were an example of the popular proverb: "There is in every valley a mark from the fox," meaning that these two men left their mark on everything they touched. No one should be frightened by the fact that some of the companions and their students were deceived by the tales these two persons told. No one is immune from the belief in statements of liars. (Sayyid Rida, Al-Manar; part 27, page 783). This information was recorded by Muhammad Abu Rayyah, AI-Sunnah AI-Muhammadiyyah, page 174.

We ought to mention that Muhammad Ibn Sa'd, in his book Al-Tabaqat, part 5, page 542, mentioned that Wahb Ibn Munabbih said:

> "I have read 92 books, all of which came from heaven. 72 are in the churches and in the hands of the people, and 20 are only known to a few."

This is what Wahb Ibn Munabbih said. But the Holy Qur'an only mentions five revealed books!

1. The Book of Ibrahim
2. Al- Tawrat (Old Testament)
3. AI-Injil (New Testament)
4. Al-Zabur (Psalms of David)
5. The Holy Qur'an

Thus, we have only five Heavenly books. Where did Wahb Ibn Munabbih find the other 87 books?

As we come to this point, we find that many companions, many of their students, and many commentators on the Qur'an from the righteous Sunni scholars have taken a great deal of information from Ka'b Al-Ahbar and Wahb Ibn Munabbih.

The Second Caliph, 'Umar, was one of those who accepted the reports of Ka'b Al-Ahbar. The Third Caliph believed him as well. Mu'awiyah, furthermore, not only accepted the reports of Ka'b, but also ordered him to pass his information along to the people of Damascus. This means that Mu'awiyah wanted the people of Damascus to accept what Ka'b reported.

Abu Hurayrah, the most frequent reporter of hadith among the companions, Abdullah Ibn 'Umar, and Abdullah Ibn Amr Al-As also accepted the reports of Ka'b.

On the other hand, we find that Imam Ali, the companions who followed him, and their students did not take from Ka'b or any other Israelite reporter who embraced Islam. Ka'b did not even contact Imam Ali or the companions who were around him, such as Abu Dharr, Ammar Ibn Yasir, Al-Miqdad Ibn al-Aswad, Salman Al-Farisi, and Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari.

Readers of books of hadiths, which were recorded by Shi'ite scholars, do not find reports that were originated by Ka'b, Wahb, or any of the Israelites. If there is anything of that kind found in Shi'ite books, it was taken from books of Sunni scholars.

It has already been mentioned that Imam Ali said about Ka'b: "Certainly he is a professional liar."

The Imams from the descendants of Imam Ali did not accept the hadiths of Ka'b. It is reported that Zurarah Ibn A'yan was sitting near Imam Muhammad Al-Baqir, grandson of the Imam Ali, while the Imam was facing the Ka'bah. The Imam said: "Certainly looking at (Ka'bah) is a worship of God." A man from Bajilah said to Abu Ja'far: Ka'b Al-Ahbar says: "The Ka'bah prostrates to the Temple of Jerusalem every morning." Abu Ja'far (Muhammad Al-Baqir) said to the man: "What do you think about what Ka'b said?" The man answered: "Ka'b told the truth." Abu Ja'far retorted saying: "No, you have lied and Ka'b has lied."

Zurarah said: I have never seen the Imam before this event saying to any other person: "You have lied." (Sayyid Hashim Ma'ruf, Sirat A1-Imams Al-Ithna 'Ashar, part 2, page 418).

The Relationship Between Muslims and Jews in the Present Era

Finally, we can say that the present very often informs us about the past and may tell us about the future. Let us look at the world in which Muslims live during the 20th century, a time distinguished from previous centuries by its Zionist character.

During this century, the Zionist dream was realized through the creation of Israel. With this event, the Arab people and governments were put to the test. Israel was planted in the heart of the Islamic and Arab world. The East and West gave their support for this location. This unanimous support was not due to their love of the Jews but rather, it was motivated by their prejudice against Islam and Muslims. East and West were determined to destroy the future of Islam.

The Arab Muslim governments stood up, thundering and expressing their anger. They threatened and declared that their aim was to throw the Israelites into the sea.

These governments participated totally or partially in three wars against Israel. In each war, Israel came out bigger in size and stronger in force. The factors which gave the Israelis these victories are the following:

1. The superiority of the Israelis over the Arabs in technology and their sincerity towards the interest of Israel.

2. The military, financial, and political assistance Israel received from western governments, especially political and financial from Jewish American Institutes.

3. The lack of seriousness on the part of the Arabs. Arab governments displayed the opposite of their stated intentions. They came to war without planning, and their preparedness was not proportionate to the size of the mission. Arab countries with petroleum gave some financial assistance to poor Arab governments for the sake of war, but these countries did not commit any military divisions in battles. Because of this, the number of Arab lives lost was incomparably larger than the number of Israeli losses.

Most Arab governments did not take a serious stand in which they would give dignity to Islam and Muslims. Yet these governments are the ones that claim to be the protectors of

Islam, its sacred places, and its principles. As a matter of fact, most of these governments conducted themselves in a way that was constantly degrading to Islam and increasingly submissive to governments in alliance with Israel.

The majority of the petroleum countries who were repeatedly humiliated by Israel continued to follow their foolish policy of putting their money in the countries most supportive of Israel. The press more than once published startling information. These Arab countries purchase bonds worth billions of dollars every year from governments allied with Israel. It was reported by some knowledgeable sources that those bonds were not supposed to be cashed. This meant that the billions of dollars which are paid for these bonds are paid toward nothing except to please the foreign masters whose aim is only to humiliate the Muslims and support the Zionists.

With all their harmful deeds, those governments which still claim that they are the protectors of the Sunni Muslims, continue, shamelessly, to spend the public's money on mercenary writers who sell their honor for money, spreading lies about the Shi'ite Muslims. They forget that it was Imam Ali who defeated the Hijazi Jews. They forget that it was Sunni companions and scholars who were students of the Rabbi Ka'b Al-Ahbar.

The Stand Of The Islamic State In Iran

To uncover the liars and hypocrites who claim dedication to Islam, the Almighty chose to create in Iran (the biggest Shi'ite country) a popular revolution, replacing the non-Islamic and Zionist agent government of the Shah by a real Islamic government. This new government has revived the rule of the Book of God, the Sunnah of the Prophet, and the instructions of the members of the House of the Prophet.

The first item on the agenda of the new Islamic government was to deport the Israeli representative from Iran and to give the Israeli Embassy in Iran to the Palestinians.

After one year of this unique event, the Egyptian government made peace with Israel and allowed it to establish an Israeli Embassy in Egypt (the country to which the good Sunni Muslims look up for religious guidance). Thus, this Embassy was the first Israeli Embassy established in an Arab country.

Israel was certain that it had no serious enemy in the Middle East because most of the governments of the Arab countries were hostile to Israel in words, peaceful in deeds. The Shah (who was imposed on the Iranian by the imperialistic forces) was a true servant of Israel. When the Islamic Republic of Iran was established, Israel, for the first time, felt that it had a real enemy in the Middle East. The Islamic Republic is based on the principles of justice without compromise. The establishment of the new Islamic Republic had on Israel the effect of a destructive earthquake.

It was expected from the Arab governments to welcome the establishment of the new formidable enemy of Israel. Iran's appearance on the political and military arena in the Middle East was an unexpected heavenly gift. It was only logical to expect the Arab governments to establish an alliance with the Islamic Republic and to take advantage of the great and unique opportunity to give Israel a devastating defeat. Unfortunately, most of the Arab governments took an extremely shameful attitude towards the new Islamic government, one that was not expected from any country other than Israel. However, in spite of its hostility toward the Islamic government, Israel did not enter an open war against Iran.

The reason is obvious.

The Arab governments which claim to be protectors of Islam have fulfilled the mission which pleases Israel and fulfills its goals. Thus, Israel did not need to spend any Israeli blood or fund. The Arab governments spent more than one hundred and fifty billion dollars in their shameful war against the Islamic Republic, the most hostile enemy to Israel, proving that they are more friendly to the enemies of Islam than they are to the true Islamic nation.

The Shi'ite Muslims In South Lebanon

However, Israel was surprised with a new and unexpected development in South Lebanon. Israel faced in 1984-85 a new enemy that was small in number but big in courage, having no arms except faith in God and love of martyrdom in the way of God.

Isaac Rabin, the Israeli Defense Minister, said that it never came to his imagination, nor did he find in the records of the Israeli information that a human being would be transformed into a living bomb that goes toward its target to explode the target and itself. However, what did not cross the mind of any Israeli has become a devastating reality to Israel and astonishing to the whole world.

A few hundred Lebanese Shi'ite Muslim heroes alone were able to fulfill what Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf States were unable to fulfill. The few hundred Lebanese heroes defeated Israel, forced its army to retreat and liberated an important portion of the occupied land of South Lebanon.

These Shi'ite Lebanese have demonstrated a heroism unparalleled in history. Unarmed men, women, and children sold their pure souls to their Lord to please Him and to defend His religion. Their battle produced priceless results, among them are the following:

1. These heroes achieved the first true victory against Israel. They forced the Israeli forces to retreat rapidly for the first time.

2. It erased the shame which the Arab nation had in many military defeats.

3. The battle liberated the Muslims in general and the Arabs in particular from the complexes of fear and despair which the repeated defeats had produced and had made the Arab people believe that the Israelites are invincible.

4. What these heroes achieved was physical evidence proving that it is possible for any Arab people to defeat the Zionists if they believe in God and the hereafter and love martyrdom.

5. They have given to all oppressed people of the earth the living example which proves that it is possible for poor people to challenge powerful nations if they face death courageously.

Yes, it is permissible to say that what happened and what will happen in South Lebanon is a start of a world-liberating battle.

What Was The Attitude Of The Arab Governments?

The size of the result of this liberating battle in South Lebanon was expected to meet a great appreciation by the Arab governments. It was expected that the Arab oil countries would shower the people of Lebanon with billions of dollars to compensate them for the sacred battle which cost the people of South Lebanon their material wealth as well as their best youth. Tens of thousands of homeless families were left exposed to the cold of winter and the heat of summer, with no protection.

These governments, which are swimming in a sea of wealth, not only refused to fulfill the minimum of their humane, Islamic, and national duties but took a hostile attitude by starting a strong and inhumane campaign against the Shi'ite heroes of South Lebanon. They conducted an extremely cruel campaign of deportation against the Lebanese Shi'ites who had lived under the authority of those governments for years, perhaps decades. They deported them without giving them even the opportunity to prepare themselves for that deportation.

This action made the economical crisis of South Lebanon suffocating. Thus, these governments rewarded the heroes of Islam with what displeases Allah and His Messenger and pleases only the Israelites and their allies.

It seems as if these Arab governments have avenged the Israeli defeat by punishing the ones who defeated Israel.

It should be made absolutely clear that the aim here is not to accuse our Sunni brothers with what some of them accused us. Certainly, we respect them and respect their imams. They are too pious to deliberately take from Ka'b Al-Ahbar or Wahb Ibn Munabbih or others from the Jews who adopted Islam superficially and hid what was in their hearts.

If some of the caliphs or prominent companions listened to these fake converts, we believe that the Mujtahid would be excused in his endeavor to research and find the truth, if he is not negligent in his research.

Those who directed accusations at their Shi'ite brothers should have studied Islamic history thoughtfully and seriously. Had they done that, they would have learned that the Shi'ites were the most formidable opponents of the Zionists and their allies.

It would not be logical for a camp to direct accusations toward another camp while the accusations are disproved by clear evidence, and while the accusers have committed worse than the accusations they hurled at the Shi'ites.

I hope that our honorable Sunni brothers will dispel from their minds those imaginary accusations which some people spread against their Shi'ite brothers, for it is clear that the Shi'ites are innocent of all these false and fabricated accusations.

Are The Shi'ites Negative Towards The Companions?

Muslim scholars differ in answering two questions pertaining to the companions of the Messenger of God:

1. Who are the companions of the Prophet Muhammad?

Most of the Sunni scholars consider all those who adopted Islam during the time of the Prophet, saw the Prophet, and prayed with him to be of his companions. However, it seems that the Messenger himself did not agree with these scholars. Al-Tabari in his History part 3, page 68, reported that there was an argument between Khalid Ibn Al-Walid and Abdul Rahman Ibn Awf when Khalid killed some members of Banu Jadhimah.

The Messenger of God sent Khalid as a missionary for Islam (not as a fighter). Khalid exceeded the order of the Messenger and killed a number of men from Banu Jadhimah after he gave them the assurance of no-harm.

Some men from Banu Jadhimah had killed Al-Fakih Ibn Al-Mughirah Al-Makhzumi, uncle of Khalid, and Awf Ibn Abd-Awf, father of Abdul Rahman, before the conquest of Mecca. Now Khalid acted in revenge in spite of the Prophet's orders.

In their heated dialogue, Abdul Rahman said to Khalid: "You followed the method of the pre-Islamic era." Khalid said: "I only avenged the killing of your father." Abd Al-Rahman: "You lie. I already killed the killer of my father, but you avenged the killing of your uncle."

Their heated argument led to a verbal abuse on the part of Khalid. When the Prophet found out about it, he said to Khalid: "...Khalid, leave my companions alone. By God, should you have a piece of gold the size of Uhud Mountain, and you spend it in the path of God, your charity would not compare to a morning or evening trip in defense of Islam by any one of my companions." (Ibn Hisham, in his Sirat of the Prophet, part 2, page 421).

This statement of the Prophet indicates that Khalid was not considered a companion of the Prophet because he told him to leave his companions alone.

Thus, the Prophet clearly indicated that Khalid is not one of his companions. Yet, this

statement was uttered by the Prophet after the conquest of Mecca (which took place two years after Khalid adopted Islam, shortly after the pact of Al-Hudaybiyyah).

The exclusion of Khalid from the community of the Prophet's companions means the exclusion of thousands of companions who adopted Islam during the time of the Prophet, who met the Prophet, and who prayed behind him.

2. Are all Companions of the Prophet Righteous?

The righteousness of all the companions and their worthiness of confidence are matters about which the Shi'ites and the Sunnis argue.

The majority of the Sunni scholars believe that all the companions are righteous and worthy of our confidence. The Shi'ite scholars are selective.

The Sunni scholars cite Qur'anic verses for substantiating their claim:

> "Muhammad is the Apostle of God; and those who are with him are firm against unbelievers, compassionate towards one another. You see them bowing and prostrating, seeking grace from God and His satisfaction ... The mark of prostration shows on their faces... Allah has promised those among them who believe and do righteous deeds forgiveness, and a great reward." (ch. 48. v. 29)

Thus, the Almighty described the companions of the Messenger as firm against the unbelievers, merciful among themselves; and that they bow and prostrate. The mark of their prostration shows on their foreheads; and that Allah promised those who believe and do righteous deeds forgiveness and a great reward.

All these descriptions substantiate the piety and virtue of the companions. The verse, however, does not include all the companions. It only includes the companions who were firm against the unbelievers, merciful among themselves.

Thus, the companions who were not firm against the unbelievers or were unmerciful to the believers would not be included by the verse.

It would be only logical to say that those who shed the blood of Muslims without justification in civil wars such as Talhah, Zubayr, and Mu'awiyah are not included in this Qur'anic statement, plus all companions who joined them in their unrighteous wars against Imam Ali, and those who divided the Muslims and destroyed their unity.

Furthermore, the end of the verse clearly indicates that the praise was not to include all the companions because it declares that only those who believed in Islam and did good deeds will

be entitled to forgiveness and great rewards.

One of the verses which is offered as evidence of the righteousness of all the companions of the Prophet is the following:

> "And the early Muslims from the Meccan migrants and the Medinite Ansar (the helpers) and those who followed them with their good deeds, Allah is well pleased with them, and they are well pleased with Him; and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, to dwell therein forever. That is the mighty achievement." (ch. 9, v. 100)

This verse, however, speaks of the virtue of the migrants and Medinites who adopted Islam at the early state of the Islamic era. Thus, it does not include the thousands of the companions who adopted Islam after the Hudaybiyyah truce or after the conquest of Mecca. These were not from the early Muslims. Their Islam took place about twenty years after the proclamation of Islam and about eight years after Hijrah.

Another verse which is cited for the righteousness of all companions is the following:

> "Allah was well pleased with the believers when they swore allegiance unto thee beneath the tree; He knew what was in their hearts, and He sent down tranquility to them and rewarded them with a speedy victory..." (ch. 48, v. 18)

This verse also does not include all the companions who declared their Islam after signing the Hudaybiyyah pact which took place during the sixth year after Hijra. The declaration of the allegiance to the Prophet under the tree took place shortly before signing the pact.

The companions who gave allegiance under the tree at Hudaybiyyah were about fourteen hundred.

It is worthy to mention that a number of students of the companions (such as Sa'id Ibn Al-Musayyab and Al-Shi'abi and Ibn Sirin) said that the early migrants were those who prayed to the two Qiblas (Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa and Al-Ka'bah). (Abu 'Umar Yusuf Ibn Abd-Barr, Al-Isti'ab part 1, pages 2-3)

Do The Hadiths Of The Prophet Substantiate The Righteousness Of The Companions

Some scholars tried to substantiate the righteousness of the companions through a number of hadiths:

l. It is reported that the Messenger of God said, "None of those who attended the battle of Badr or the pact of Hudaybiyyah will enter Hell."

2. It is also reported that the Prophet said: "None of those who gave their allegiance under the tree (during the event of Hudaybiyyah) will enter the Fire." (Ibn Abd al-Barr, page 4)

The two hadiths do not substantiate the righteousness of any companions except the companions who were present at Badr and Hudaybiyyah. Putting them together, their number would not reach two thousand, while the number of the companions was much bigger. Those who attended the conquest of Mecca were ten thousand, and those who went with the Prophet to Tabuk were about twenty-five thousand.

Thus, the majority of the companions of the Prophet would not be included in these two hadiths.

The Opinions Of The Selectionists

The Shi'ite Muslim scholars did not put all the companions in one rank; nor did they say that all of them were righteous. Some of them were righteous to the highest degree. Some of them were truthful and worthy of confidence, but they were not entirely righteous. Some of them were not known to be righteous or unrighteous, and some of them were known to be devious.

Qur'anic Verses Support The Selectionists

These scholars who view that some of the companions were neither righteous nor in a place of confidence support their view with a number of Qur'anic verses:

> "And they say: 'obedience'; but when they leave thee, some of them spend the night planning other than what they say to you. Allah records what they plan by night. Disregard them and put thy trust in Allah. Allah is Sufficient Trustee." (ch. 4, v. 81)

This verse declares that a number of those who were residents of Medina were Muslims, and they prayed with the Prophet and attended his gatherings and heard the Messenger commanding the Muslims to do some good deeds. They used to say to the Prophet: "We heard you and we will obey you;" but when they left him, they did not obey the Messenger.

We find in chapter nine of the Holy Qur'an many verses which indicate that some of the companions of the Messenger were people of hypocrisy, and the Messenger did not know their hypocrisy.

> "And among those around you of the wandering Arabs are hypocrites and among the people of Medina there are some who persist in hypocrisy whom thou (0 Muhammad) know not. We know them and We shall chastise them

> twice; then they will be relegated to a painful doom." (ch. 9, v. 101)
>
> "O Prophet! Combat the disbelievers and the hypocrites and be hard on them. Their abode is Hell, a hapless journey's end. They swear by Allah that they said nothing (wrong), yet they did say the word of disbelief. They disbelieved after they declared their Islam, and they plotted that which they could not carry out, and they sought revenge only because Allah and His Messenger enriched them of His bounty..." (ch. 9, v. 73)
>
> "Among them are men who made a covenant with Allah (saying): If He gives us of His bounty we will give alms and become of the righteous. Yet, when He gave them of His bounty, they hoarded it and turned away, averse. So He made a consequence (to be) hypocrisy in their hearts until the day when they shall meet Him, because they broke their word to Allah and because they lied." (ch. 9, vs. 75-77)

We also find in chapter 33, "The Confederates":

> "And when the hypocrites, and those in whose hearts is a disease say 'Allah and His Messenger promised us nothing but delusions.' And when a party of them said: 'Oh folk of Yathrib! there is no stand possible for you; therefore, go back.' And some of them even ask permission of the Prophet, saying: 'Our homes are exposed to the enemy, and they lay not exposed.' They only wished to flee." (ch. 33, vs. 12-13)

The chapter of Al-Munafiqun is a clear evidence that a number of Muslims (who declared their Islam at the time of the Prophet, and lived with him in Medina, and prayed with him, were hypocrites. They came to the Prophet to defend themselves by taking an oath in the presence of the Prophet that they did not betray him, and they were liars. They had believed in Islam then deserted it and Allah sealed their hearts.

> "When the hypocrites come to thee (O Muhammad), they say: 'We bear witness that thou art indeed Allah's Messenger. And Allah knows that thou art indeed His Messenger, and Allah bears witness that the hypocrites indeed are speaking falsely. They made their oaths a shield so that they may turn (men) from the way of Allah. Verily, evil is that which they wanted to do. That is because they believed and then disbelieved; therefore, their hearts were sealed so that they understand not.' " (ch. 63, vs. 1-3)

These numerous verses which are in many of the Qur'anic chapters testify clearly that many of the people who declared Islam during the time of the Prophet, and who lived and prayed with him, were hypocrites. What testimony could be bigger than the testimony of the Qur'an?

These hypocrites were living with the rest of the companions, and their names were not known. Therefore, it is impossible to avoid taking hadiths from them or know how many they were. Historians, among them Al-Tabari in his History, part 2, page 504, and Ibn Hisham in his Al-Sirah Al-Nabawiyyah, part 2, page 64, reported that when the Messenger went with his army to Uhud, he had with him one thousand companions. But Abdullah Ibn Abi Salul left the Prophet and went back to Medina accompanying three hundred from the Medinites. Islamic history did not inform us of the names of any of the three hundred except the name of their chief, Abdullah Ibn Abi Salul.

Knowing that the situation was so, how can we avoid taking hadiths from these hypocrites, who were not separated from the good companions through any mark of distinction?

The Companions Who Shed The Blood Of The Muslims

We should not forget that there were among the companions some prominent men such as Talhah, Zubayr, Mu'awiyah, Amr Ibn Al-As, Al-Nu'man Ibn Bashir, and Samurah Ibn Jundab who shed Muslim blood. These should not be considered in a place of confidence after they shed the blood of thousands of Muslims in order to reach their worldly goals.

Allah declared in His book the following:

> "And whoever kills a believer deliberately, his reward is Hell forever, and the wrath of God is upon him, and He cursed him and prepared for him a great punishment." (ch. 4, v. 73)

Thus, if a person kills a believer, his abode will be the Fire and the wrath of Allah is upon him, and He curses him and prepares for him a great chastisement. This will be the fate of people such as Mu'awiyah, Amr Ibn Al-As, Talhah, and Zubayr who shed the blood of more than forty-thousand Muslims.

It would be very illogical to consider people who committed so many sins righteous and their reports acceptable. There are people who say that these men who committed such sins are from the companions whom Allah likes, because they were from the early Meccan and Medinite Muslims, and they were among the ones who gave their allegiance to the Messenger under the tree of Hudaybiyyah. These are from among the ones whom Allah was pleased with; and whoever Allah was pleased with one time, He will never be angry with. This would be clear when we look at the end of the verse which gives the early Muslims of Mecca and the Medinite the good tidings that they will have gardens under which rivers flow, wherein they will dwell forever.

But this verse and the verse of allegiance under the tree of Hudaybiyyah did not include men

such as Mu'awiyah and Amr Ibn Al-As because they were not from the early Muslims nor from the early migrants from Mecca to Medina; nor were they from the people of the allegiance under the tree of Hudaybiyyah. Amr Ibn Al-As adopted Islam after Hudaybiyyah and Mu'awiyah adopted Islam after the conquest of Mecca.

Furthermore, we cannot find in the Qur'an any verse that declares that whomever God has been pleased with, God will not be angry with.

It is inconceivable that Allah will give a permanent immunity against punishment to a person who did a good deed, such as being of the early Muslims or early migrants from Mecca to Medina, and that Allah will forgive his shedding the blood of thousands of believers without any justification. If it were so, it would mean that a companion could cancel all the Qur'anic rules and the instructions of the Prophet. Certainly, we can not believe this when we remember that Allah said to His own Messenger Muhammad: "Say: surely I fear (if I disobey my Lord) the chastisement of a grievous day." (ch. 6, v. 15)

If a companion can interpret the Qur'anic verses and the Prophet's words the way he wants, he may be able to give a verdict that the five daily prayers are only desirable and not imperative. He may say "I understand from Aqimu Al-Salat (offer prayer) that the prayer is only desirable. Nor do I understand from the word "salat" that it has to contain bowing and prostrating, or reading from the Qur'an or the declaration of the Shahadah. It would be sufficient in the prayer to supplicate the Lord to forgive or to give sustenance or to prolong life because the word Salat used to mean supplication before Islam.

The Messenger Of God Predicted The Deviation Of Many Of His Companions

The Messenger informed the Muslims that many of his companions will deviate after him. Al-Bukhari in his Sahih, part 2, page 149, reported that the Prophet said:

> "A number of my companions will come to drink from the basin. When I recognize them, they will be taken away from my sight. I would say: 'My Lord, these are my companions.' And Allah will say: 'You do not know what they innovated after you.' "

The same source, page 150, recorded that Abu Hazim reported that Sahl Ibn Sa'd reported that the Prophet said:

"I shall come to the Hawd (basin of water) before you. Whoever meets me there will drink water. And whoever drinks of it will never be thirsty afterwards. Groups will come to me, and I will recognize them and they will recognize me and they will be screened from me." Abu Hazim said: "Al-Nu'man Ibn Ayyash heard me and said: 'I testify that Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri said and I heard him adding to it the following: I will say: "May God put away from me

whoever deviated after me.' "

Similar to this is reported by Muslim in his Sahih, part 15, pages 53-54. Al-Bukhari reported in the section of Al-Hawd that Abu Hurayrah reported that the Messenger of God said:

> "On the Day of Judgement a group of my companions will come to the Hawd (Basin), and they will be prevented from drinking out of the basin. I will say: 'My Lord, these are my companions.' He will say: 'Certainly you do not know what they innovated after you. They deserted their religion.' "

Al-Bukhari reported in his Sahih, part 4, page 169, that one reporter quoted Ibn Abbas as saying that the Prophet said:

> "You will be resurrected bare footed, unclothed, and uncircumcised." Then he read: 'As We started the first creation, We shall resurrect it, a promise on Our part. Certainly We shall fulfill it.' "
>
> "Certainly a number of my companions will be taken to the left side, and I will say: 'My companions, my companions.' Allah will say: 'They continued deserting their faith after you left them.'"
>
> I will say as the good servant of God (the Messiah) said: "And I was a witness on them as long as I was with them..."

Muslim in his Sahih, part 10, page 59, reported that the Messenger of God said: "I will be the first one to come to the Basin, and I shall be challenged about some people and I will lose them, then I will say: 'My Lord, these are my companions; these are my companions.' I will be told: 'You do not know what they innovated after you.' "

Muslim in his Sahih, part 10, page 64, recorded that Anas Ibn Malik reported that the Prophet said:

> "Men from among the people who accompanied me shall come (on the Day of Judgement) to the Basin. When I see them and they are brought to me, they will be taken away from me. I will say: 'My Lord, these are my companions.' It will be said to me: 'You do not know what they innovated after you.' "

Unity of the Muslims and the School of Ahl al-Bayt

As we come to the end of our discussion, we find that Sunnites and Shi'ites do not disagree on any fundamental point in Islam, and that the mercenary writers, whose goal is to divide Muslims, can not substantiate any of their accusations. They have tried to spread falsehood and deliberately mislead some uneducated Muslims. The vicious campaign which they have waged is opposed to the Holy Qur'an and the authentic hadiths of the Prophet. To prove this, we only need to read the first five verses from the second chapter of the Qur'an, in which the Almighty has defined the meaning of Al-Muttaqin (the righteous).

> "Alif Lam Mim. This is the Book whereof there is no doubt, a guidance to those who are righteous, who believe in the unseen, and offer prayer, and spend of what We have provided them, And who believe in that which is revealed to thee (Muhammad) and that which was revealed before thee, and who are certain of the Hereafter. They follow the guidance (which comes) from their Lord; and they are the ones who will prosper."

These Qur'anic verses inform us of the requirements which, if a person fulfills them, he will be of the righteous people, and whoever is righteous, is a Muslim and a believer.

These requirements are the following:

1. To believe in the unseen (as we believe in the Creator and the Hereafter without seeing them).

2. To offer the five daily prayers.

3. To spend, in the way of God, a portion of the wealth God had provided us (by paying Zakat).

4. To believe in that which God has revealed to His Messenger Muhammad.

5. To believe in that which was revealed to all Messengers before Muhammad.

6. To believe in the Hereafter.

Thus, whoever meets these six requirements, as indicated by the first verse, will be righteous, and as indicated by the last verse, will be well-guided and successful.

Here, we can say that every Muslim who is committed to the principles of Islam will meet all the requirements.

True Muslims do not disagree on any Islamic principle, and all of them believe in that which the Almighty revealed to Muhammad and the previous Prophets.

Authentically reported statements of the Prophet are in accordance with the Holy Qur'an. The following seven hadiths clearly point this out.

1. Al-Bukhari, in his Sahih, part 1, page 19, and Muslim, in his Sahih, part 1, page 66, recorded that Talhah Ibn Ubaydullah reported that a Bedouin had the following dialogue with the Messenger:

The Bedouin: What is Islam?
The Messenger: Five daily prayers.
The Bedouin: Do I have to add to them any prayer?
The Messenger: No, unless you volunteer. And fast in the month of Ramadhan.
The Bedouin: Do I have to add to it any other fast?
The Messenger: No, unless you volunteer. Then he mentioned to him the prescribed charity.
The Bedouin: Do I have to add to it?
The Messenger: No, unless you volunteer.
The Bedouin: By God, I shall not add to these; nor shall I subtract from them.
The Messenger: The bedouin has succeeded if he is true.

2. Muslim, in his Sahih, recorded that Abu Hurayrah reported that a Bedouin said to the Prophet: "Advise me of a deed that if I accomplish, I will be admitted to Paradise." The Messenger said: "Worship God, ascribe no partner to Him, offer the prescribed prayer, give the prescribed charity, and fast the month of Ramadhan." The Bedouin said: "By God, in Whose hand is my soul, I shall not add to these, nor shall I subtract from them." When he turned his back, the Messenger said: "Whoever desires to look at a man from the people of Paradise, should look at this man."

3. Muslim also recorded that Abadah Ibn Al-Samit, while he was on his deathbed, said to the people around him: "I have reported to you all the beneficial Hadiths I heard from the Messenger except one. I shall report it to you while my soul is being taken by God. I heard the Messenger of God say:

"Whoever testifies that there is no God but the Almighty, and that Muhammad is Messenger

of God, God shall protect him from Hell."

4. Muslim also recorded that 'Ubadah Ibn Al-Samit reported that the Messenger of God said: "Whoever says: I bear witness that there is no God but the Almighty, alone without partner; that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger; that Jesus is His servant and Messenger and the Son of His maid, and word, which He (Allah) had given to Mary and a spirit from Him, that Paradise is a reality and Hell is a reality, God shall admit him into Paradise through any of its eight gates He chooses.

5. Muslim also recorded that Mu'adh Ibn Jabal reported that the Messenger said: "What is due to God from His servants is that they worship Him, ascribe to Him no partner; and what is due to God's servants from Him is that He will not punish anyone that does not ascribe to Him a partner."

6. Al-Bukhari, in his Sahih, recorded that Abu Hurayrah reported that the Messenger said to a questioner: The Iman (faith) is to believe in God, His Angels, His meeting, His Messengers, and to believe in the resurrection. He said also to the questioner: Islam is to worship God, ascribing to Him no partner; to offer the prescribed prayers; to pay the prescribed charity, and to fast the month of Ramadhan.

7. Muslim recorded, in his Sahih, that 'Umar reported that the Messenger said to a questioner: "Islam is to testify that there is no God but the Almighty and that Muhammad is the Messenger of God; to offer the prescribed prayer; pay the regular charity; fast the month of Ramadhan, and visit the Ka'bah.

The same questioner asked the Prophet to inform him about Iman. The Prophet said to him: To believe in God, His Angels, His Book, His Messengers, the Day of Judgement, and to believe in: "Qadar," pleasant and unpleasant.

These authentic hadiths, plus many other reliable hadiths which I did not quote, agree with the Qur'an and indicate that whoever believes in God, His Angels, His scriptures, His Messengers, the Hereafter, worships God alone by offering the prescribed prayer, fasts the month of Ramadhan, pays zakat, and performs the pilgrimage if he has the financial and physical ability, will be considered a Muslim in good standing.

There is no real difference between the Shi'ites and Sunnites concerning articles of the Faith of Islam. There is a disagreement between the two schools in two areas.

1. The Caliphate.

2. The Islamic rule when there is no clear Qur'anic statement, nor is there a hadith upon which Muslim schools have agreed.

The disagreement about the caliphate should not be a source of division between the two schools. Muslims agree that the Messenger did not appoint Abu Bakr as the first Caliph. They agree that his caliphate came through election. Election implies choice and freedom, and that every Muslim has the right to elect or not elect the nominee. Whoever refuses to elect him does not oppose God or His Messenger because neither God nor His Messenger appointed the nominee.

Election, by its nature, does not compel any Muslim to elect a specific nominee. Otherwise, the election would be a coercion. This means that the election would not lose its own nature. It would be a dictatorial operation. It is well known that the Prophet said: "There is no validity for any allegiance given by force."

Imam Ali refused to give his allegiance to Abu Bakr for six months. He gave his allegiance to Abu Bakr only after the death of his wife Fatima Al-Zahra, Daughter of the Holy Prophet. (Al-Bukhari, his Sahih, part 5, page 177).

If refusal to give allegiance to an elected nominee was prohibited in Islam, Imam Ali would not have allowed himself to delay in giving his allegiance. The well known companions, Abdullah Ibn 'Umar and Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas, refused to give their allegiance to Imam Ali for the duration of his caliphate. (Ibn Al-Athir, his history AI-Kamil, part 3, page 98). But the Imam did not punish the companions, nor did he call them transgressors.

If it was permissible for a Muslim, who was a contemporary of a caliph, to refuse to give his allegiance, it would be more permissible for a person who came in a later century to believe or not believe in the qualifications of that elected caliph. In doing so, he would not be sinning.

The Disagreement About Islamic Rules

As to the disagreement among the Mujtahids (the high Islamic scholars) in their verdicts, it is permissible by all Islamic schools. Therefore, we see that the imams of the four schools did not agree with each other in their verdicts concerning many Islamic rules. Had they been always in agreement, there would be only one Sunni school rather than four.

If it is permissible for Muslims to follow the four schools, the school of Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq would have more right to be followed. Both Abu Hanifah and Malik were students of Imam Ja'far. Al-Shafi'i was a student of Muhammad Ibn Al-Hassan Shalbani who was a student of Abu Hanifah, and Imam Ahmad was student of Al-Shafi'i.

Thus, the four imams were either students of Imam Ja'far or students of his students.

It would be extremely curious to impose on Muslims the duty of following the verdicts of one of the four imams and prevent them from following the verdict of Imam Ja'far who was the teacher of the four imams.

Certainly this does not agree with the Qur'an because the Qur'an declares that the Almighty had completed his religion before the death of the Messenger of God. The Holy Qur'an declares that in the following verse:

> "Today I have completed your religion for you, and have perfected my favor upon you and chosen Islam as your religion." (ch. 5, v.10)

Since the religion had been completed before the death of the Messenger, it would be unfair to impose on the Muslims to follow one of the four schools which came over one hundred years after the death of the Prophet Muhammad.

Abu Hanifah was born 80 years after the Hijra and so was Malik Ibn Anas. These two are the oldest of the four imams. They did not become imams the day they were born. It took each of them at least forty years or more to reach the degree of Ijtihad. This means that the school of Abu Hanifah was formed 120 years after the death of the Messenger and so was the school of Malik. The other two schools came decades after the Hanafi and Maliki schools.

This means that the imposition on Muslims to follow one of the four schools is an innovation which has no support from the Book of God or the hadiths of the Prophet. No one reported that the Messenger of God ordered Muslims to follow any of these schools.

Had this imposition been legitimate, all devotional works of the companions (including the four caliphs) would be nullified and unaccepted because they were not Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, or Hanbali. And what should one say about the Prophet's worship?!!! He also was not a follower of any of the four schools.

It would have been more logical to say that it is permissible for any Muslim to follow any imam he considers (after serious research) to be the most knowledgeable among them whether that imam is related or not to the four schools.

The School Of Ahl Al-Bayt

We are certain that the Prophet neither commanded Muslims nor recommended that they follow any of the four imam's verdicts. There is no reported statement by the Prophet that he commanded us to follow one of the four imams (Abu Hanifah, Malik, Shafi'i, or Ibn Hanbal).

However, the Sunnites and the Shi'ites recorded in their authentics that the Messenger commanded Muslims to follow the members of his House.

Al-Tirmidhi and others from the authors of the Sihah (authentics) reported that Zayd Ibn Arqam reported that the Messenger of God said:

> "Certainly I am leaving for you that which if you follow, you will never go astray after me: the Book of God, a rope extended from heaven to earth, and the Members of my House. They will never part with each other until they come to me on the Day of Judgement while I am standing at the Hawd (basin). Be careful how you treat the two after me." Al-Tirmidhi, his Sunan, part 5, page 329)

Al- Tirmidhi also said:

> "There are on this subject hadiths of Abu Dharr and Abu Sa'id and Zayd Ibn Arqam and Hudhayfah Ibn Usayd."

This hadith clearly indicates that the Messenger commanded Muslims to follow the Book of God and the instructions of the members of his House concerning Islamic law. He informed us that the instructions of the Members of his House always agree with the Qur'an. He declared that the Qur'an and his Itrah (Members of his House) will never part with each other until the Day of Judgement.

Muslim scholars may argue about the indication of this hadith that the Prophet Muhammad appointed the members of his House to be the caliphs after him. But it is not logical to argue about the indications of this hadith that the Prophet wanted Muslims to follow the instructions of the Members of his House concerning Islamic rules.

It is needless to emphasize the authenticity of this hadith after it was reported by about twenty companions. [Ed. Please see Hadith al-Thaqalayn, a study of its tawatur] The Sunnite Muslim scholars say it is mandatory to follow one of the four schools and their verdicts. Yet it was never reported that the Prophet said that the duty of Muslims is to follow the verdicts of these four schools. Knowing this, we find no justification for the refusal of the Sunni scholars to follow the instructions of the Members of the House of the Holy Prophet Muhammad after the Prophet Muhammad himself testified that the members of his House are allies of the Qur'an and will never part with it.

The least that the Muslims should do toward the teachings of the members of the House of the Holy Prophet Muhammad is to consider their teaching equal to the four schools (if not better).

The fact is that the followers of the four schools took a negative attitude towards the teachings of the Imams from the House of the Prophet without knowing their teachings. They thought,

without any research, that their teaching is not worthy of consideration and respect. This tells us that the followers of the four schools did not agree with their imams, and that they were more kingly than the kings. Abu Hanifah was a student of Imam Ja'far, and he believed that Imam Ja'far was the most knowledgeable in Islamic law among all the people of his time.

The Abbasid Al-Mansur commanded Abu Hanifah to prepare for Imam Ja'far a number of questions concerning Islamic law and to ask the Imam those questions in the presence of Al-Mansur. Abu Hanifah prepared forty difficult questions and asked Imam Ja'far about them in the presence of Al-Mansur. The Imam not only answered all the questions but also informed him of the opinions of the Iraqi scholars and the Hijazi scholars. Abu Hanifah commented on this episode saying:

> "Certainly, the most knowledgeable among people is the most knowledgeable of their different opinions."

Abu Hanifah described his feeling (when he entered the palace of Al-Mansur and found Imam Ja'far with him) by saying:

> "When I saw Imam Ja'far, I felt that his personality commands more respect than that of the caliph himself. Yet the caliph was ruling the Muslim world, and Imam Ja'far was a private citizen." (Shaykh Muhammad Abu Zahra, AI-Imam AI-Sadiq, page 27)

Imam Malik was also one of the students of Imam Ja'far, and it is reported that Malik said:

> "I used to come to Ja'far Ibn Muhammad and went to him for a long time. Whenever I visited him, I found him praying, fasting, or reading the Qur'an. Whenever he reported a statement of the Messenger of God, he was with ablution. He was a distinguished worshipper who was unconcerned with the material world. He was of the God- fearing people."

Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal reported the famous hadith of Thaqalayn (the two valuables) through more than one source. He reported through his channel to Zayd Ibn Thabit that the Prophet said:

> "Certainly I am leaving for you two Caliphs: The Book of God, a rope extended between the heaven and the earth and the members of my House. They will never part with each other until the Day of Judgement" (Imam Ahmad, his Musnad, part 5, page 181).

Imam Ahmad also reported through his channel to Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri that the Messenger of God said:

> "Certainly I am about to be called upon (by God), and I will respond (by departing from this world), and I am leaving for you the two valuables: The Book of God and the members of my House. The Book of God (which) is a rope extended from heaven to earth and the members of my House. The Almighty informed me that the two will not part with each until they meet me near the Basin. Beware how you treat them after me (same source, part 3, page 17).

Imam Ahmad also reported this hadith through his channel to Zayd Ibn Arqam (same source, page 371).

Shaykh Muhammad Abu Zahra who was one of the outstanding Sunni contemporary scholars said:

> "The Muslim scholars of various Islamic schools never agreed unanimously on a matter as much as they agree on the knowledge of Imam Ja'far and his virtue. The Sunni imams who lived during his time were his students. Malik was one of them and those who were as contemporary as Malik such as Sufyan Al-Thawri and many others. Abu Hanifah also was his student in spite of their being close in age, and he considered Imam Ja'far the most knowledgeable in the Muslim world." (the same source, page 66).

Imam Al-Shafi'i was truly attached to the members of the House of the Prophet. His love and adherence to their way is well known and conveyed by scholars who were in the place of confidence of Muslims. Imam Al-Razi recorded in his commentary on the following Qur'anic verse:

> "Say (to the Muslims) 'I ask from you no reward (on my endeavor in leading you to the right path) except your love for my close relatives.'

Imam Al-Shafi'i in his poetry said:

> "Members of the House of the Prophet, your love is a Divine duty on mankind. God revealed it in His Qur'an. It is of your high distinctions that whoever does not pray on you has no prayer." He also said "If the love of the members of the House of the Prophet is Rafd (rejection), let mankind and the Jinns testify that I am a rejecter."

My Humble Effort In The Path Of Islamic Unity

In 1959, I attempted to begin a campaign in this direction. I visited Egypt and met the late

President Jamal Abdul Nassar. I discussed with him and separately with the late Shaykh Al-Azhar, Shaykh Mahmud Shaltut (on the first day of July), the matter of reconciliation between the Sunnite and the Shi'ite schools. I spoke to each of the two leaders about the necessity of solving this problem and about the way through which it can be solved.

This problem, I said, had started during the Umayyad era and continued through the Abbasid and the Turkish era. We still suffer a great deal through this problem, which continues to separate Muslims and spread suspicion among them and make them reciprocate false accusations.

The Shi'ite Imami Ja'fari (the followers of the Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq) are not seeking a privilege or superiority. They want the Muslim world to know that the teachings of Imam Ja'far Al-Sadiq and the rest of the members of the House of the Holy Prophet are not less valuable and sound than the teachings of the four imams. The teachings which the Shi'ite Imami Ja'fari follow deserve and command the respect of all Muslims. Those who follow these teachings are sound Muslims and true believers like the followers of the four schools. I said that a declaration by Shaykh Al-Azhar in this direction will be a sound step in the way of Islamic unity.

Shaykh Al-Azhar asked me: "Would it not be sufficient for solving this problem to teach the Ja'fari Madhhab (school of thought) at Al-Azhar?" I replied in the negative and mentioned to him two reasons:

1. Teaching of the Ja'fari Madhhab does not indicate that Al-Azhar and its shaykh believe in the soundness of such a Madhhab. Al-Azhar can decide to teach the Marxist theory. This would not indicate that you believe in the soundness of that theory.

2. Teaching of the Ja'fari Madhhab at Al-Azhar may make a few hundred students of Al-Azhar aware of this Madhhab. This is not our goal. Our goal is to inform millions of Muslims of the soundness of the teachings of the members of the House of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. This would not be accomplished except by issuing a verdict of equality between the Ja'fari Madhhab and the four Madhhabs. Such a declaration should be published and announced through all Islamic media. This may inform millions of Muslims at once about this truth which has been ignored for hundreds of years.

The grand Shaykh responded to this suggestion immediately. On the following day his son-in-law and secretary, Mr. Ahmad Nassar, visited me and brought the good tidings; the Grand Shaykh had responded to my suggestion and issued a verdict about the subject. I went with him to the Grand Shaykh, thanking him for his historical achievement. The Shaykh read to me the text of the verdict before publishing it.

On the seventh of July, 1959, the Middle East radio station and the Egyptian and the

Lebanese press published the text of the verdict of the Grand Shaykh.

Shaykh Al-Azhar issued his verdict in a form of an answer to a question that was directed to him as follows:

"Some people view that in order to have religiously sound devotions and transactions, it is imperative to follow one of the four known Islamic schools: Hanafi, Shafi'i, Hanbali, or Maliki. This excludes the two Shi'ite schools: Imami (Ja'fari) and Zaydi. Shaykh Shaltut in answering this question stated the following:"

> "It is permissible for a "non-mujtahid" (the one who is not qualified to give his own opinion in Islamic law) to follow the opinion of the "the 'Ulama" (the Muslim scholars), whose knowledge and piety are known, provided such an opinion reaches its followers in a correct and nearly certain way, directly or indirectly.
>
> "We should not be concerned with a view expressed in some books which claims that the four schools are the only ones to follow, and that it is not permissible for a Muslim to move from one school to another.
>
> "The word Shi'a (Shi'ite) by which the followers of Ali (son of Abu Talib) are known, is derived from the word "mushayya'ah" which means to follow . . . There are groups related to Ali, and they are the well guided ones. Of these Shi'a is the group which is known by the name of Ja'fari or Imami Ithna-Ashari. This well known school follows principles that are taken from the Book of God and the teachings of His Messenger which reached them through their Imams in both fundamental belief and Islamic law.
>
> "The difference between the Ja'fari and Sunni schools is not greater than the difference among the Sunni schools themselves. They (the Ja'faris) believe in the fundamental principles of Islam as they are stated in the Glorious Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet. They also believe in all the rules whose inclusion in the religion of Islam is self-evident and whose recognition is required for being a Muslim and the denial of which excludes the person from Islam. The Madhhab of these Ja'fari Shi'ites in the Islamic laws is completely recorded and well-known. It has its own books, conveyers (who reported the statements of the Prophet and the Imams), and the supporting evidence of what they convey. The authors of these books and those from whom these authors had received the (hadiths) are well-known, and their scholarly and jurisprudential ranks are respected among Muslim scholars."

From this explanation, it becomes evident that:

1. Islam does not command any of its followers to follow a particular Islamic school. On the contrary, it establishes for every Muslim the right to follow, at the beginning, any one of the correctly conveyed Madhhabs, whose verdicts are recorded in their respective books. It is permissible also for anyone that follows one of these schools to shift to another, any other school, and he is not sinning by doing that.

2. The Ja'fari school which is known as the Madhhab of the Ithna-Ashari, Imami Shi'a is a sound school. It is permissible to worship God according to its teachings like the rest of the Sunni schools.

3. Muslims ought to know this and get rid of their undue bigotry to particular schools. The religion of God and His law do not follow, nor are they bound to, a particular school. All the founders of these schools are Mujtahids (qualified to give verdict) reward-deserving from God, and acceptable to Him. It is permissible for the non-mujtahid to follow them and to accord with their teachings, whether in devotion or transactions.

This recognition should have taken place during the second century after the Hijra when the four Islamic schools were at the state of formation. The School of Imam Ja'far is the School of the House of the Prophet Muhammad who declared it to be inseparable from the Qur'an, and that the adherence to the Qur'anic teaching and their teaching represents security against straying. This is the School of Imam Ali who was declared by the Prophet to be the gate of the city of knowledge.

The fact is that the Umayyad and Abbasid policies viewed that recognizing the School of the House of the Prophet is dangerous to them.

However, the Declaration of Shaykh Al-Azhar is a positive step and in the right direction. It is true that it came very late but it is an indication that some of the contemporary Islamic scholars have a new and sound way of thinking. Should this step be followed by other positive steps, the Muslim World may regain its brotherhood and unity.

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